

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Mel Smith, Mormon Historian and Retired State Worker

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PLACE: Mel's Kitchen in his trailer home in San Pete County, Utah,
between towns of
Mt. Pleasant and Fairview

INTERVIEWER: Mark Junge

TRANSCRIPTION BY: Sue Keefe

MJ: Mel, what is your occupation?

MS: Well, I'm a historian by profession, but now I'm kind of a gentleman farmer, retired trying to decide who I am and what the world is all about.

MJ: That sounds real reasonable. OK, today what I think we'll do, as we

mentioned before off tape, is talk about some of the evolution of how you're thinking, how your thinking has changed throughout your life, talk a little bit about where and when you were born, something about your family, talking about tapping into the abundance, and talk a little bit about Mormon myths. So let's just let it roll, now, eventually what's going to happen. We're only going to use, like I say, about that much in the book, maybe that much, maybe even three quarters of a page, but a lot of this stuff will just go down and sit on the shelves of the archives in Cheyenne until your kids go back there and say, "Gee, that was Grandpappy Smith talking way back in 1990 about tapping into the abundance." OK, so when and where were you born?

MS: Now, I own half of Jackson County, Missouri. One of the Mormon myths is the Mormons going back to Jackson County, Missouri for the millennium.

MJ: OK, when and where were you born?

MS: OK, I was born in Cowley, Wyoming, in the Big Horn Basin 15 June 1928.

MJ: So, you are now?

MS: I'm 62 years old, just over 62.

MJ: Just turned 62, which means you've got a little ways to go yet before you can be in the next division for joggers, runners and bikers, right?

MS: Right, 65 is. . .some of the categories I get into now, I'm already 20 years over the limit, so...

MJ: Who were your parents.

MS: My father was Heman Tuttle Smith.

MJ: How do you spell that?

MS: Heman Tuttle Smith. He was born in Bountiful, Utah, then his mother moved to the Big Horn Basin with a settlement of Cowley, Barn and Lovell by the Mormon pioneers in 1900, 1901. She went up and she was a midwife, she was a plural wife of Samuel Harrison Bailey Smith, my

grandfather. After the manifesto and pressures against the cohabitation and then here children by her first marriage, her husband had been killed, they moved up to the Big Horn Basin, they were grown, and so she moved up with Dad as a polygamy widow and orphan in 1901. He was just six years old at the time, and was born in Bountiful.

MJ: This is your Dad you're talking about?

MS: Right, and my mother, Edetha Thomas Smith, she was born in Goshen, Utah. Then her family moved to the Big Horn Basin, in 1901, just before Dad and his mother moved up there. In fact, no, the other way around. Dad and his mother moved up first, and the route they took to go from to Utah to the Big Horn Basin, for these people, was to take the Denver, Rio Grande Railroad to Denver, then take the Cincinnati, Burlington and Quincy north, they could go through Sheridan and to Billings, and then from Billings they caught...I think they had a railroad down as far as Bridger, Montana. Then from Bridger they rode a stagecoach down to Garland, and then from Garland horse and buggy or whatever they could. When they got to Garland Mother said she met her future mother-in-law, that is Dad's mother, who was a midwife, and she had been returning from a case of measles or something up there on the project up there at Powell, you know, the irrigation project. She remembered how concerned her mother was that there might be some contamination passed on, but that was her first introduction.

MJ: Was this part of a...the large migration, the Mormon migration to the Big Horn Basin?

MS: Yes, this was the last formal migration sent out officially by the church. The Mormons had moved up into, on the Greybull River, the Woodruff area, Burlington and Otto earlier, in the 1890's, but the last official settlement by the Mormon church was in the Big Horn Basin in 1900, 1901.

MJ: Now, did they come up as a direct result of a church policy or did they come up like, say immigrants coming westward over the Oregon trail, for opportunity?

MS: It was policy, but it was also opportunity. Part of this, this story is very much a part of my, the mythology that I grew up with. Many of the

pioneers out of Rich County, and Woodruff, Utah, took wagons, covered wagons and drove overland, so in a sense they were going like the original pioneers who came to Zion, to Utah, and Salt Lake Valley and other locations. This was a migration to this part of the Lord'en, was the terminology which was used in the testimony of those original pioneers that I used to listen to all the time, and so the myth of fleeing into the wilderness, the Lord's vineyard, and this was their particular area, and they were called there for a purpose, so I felt, growing up, that I was in a chosen place, a chosen land, a part of Zion, so to speak, even though some people had the objectivity to see the alkali, I could only see that this was a special place and that I had the teaching of the Mormon church as it came to me and my family and the community, the way I heard them, was that I was saved for these last days, to be born to a special family, in a special place, and the Lord had a special mission for me and it was my job to build up the Kingdom.

MJ: Just like what we heard last at the Mantie Mormon Miracle Pageant. This was Latter Day, this is your mission, this is your objective in latter day.

MS: That's right. The latter day is ?, so this was the pioneer story all over again, and interestingly enough, the books that I grew up reading as a teenager, church books, were books that my father and his mother had brought because the pioneers in Cowley were very poor. First generation pioneers tend to be very poor, so the books that were available were books that they brought with them, and those books were written by Partridge (?) Pratt, one of the original apostles of the church, Brigham Young and Orson Pratt, so that what I was studying as a young man was not contemporary church leaders, but the original church leaders, and the original Utah church leaders particularly, so the myth of that special sense being Israel and the chosen people in the wilderness and the enemy out there and fleeing from the enemy, that was all part of the myth of my growing up and part of my...

MJ: If you had stayed Mormon, you could have in turn passed this on to your kids, had you decided to emigrate to some other part of the United States.

MS: Well, if the world had remained as isolated and, you know, I mean, the isolation, the second world war of course broke down the isolation. The physical, cultural, and psychological isolation of rural America, of Mormon Big Horn Basin, I mean, it was just a different world. There was the

intrusion of the radio, the intrusion of the TV, education -- all of these things began to intrude into the world that was before so isolated.

MJ: Mel, explain, this is for the benefit of posterity and everybody else that's interested, explain your lineage now, cause I think even though you summarized that to me last night, I think that's important to put down on tape.

MS: OK. Well, my mother's family was Welsh on her fathers side, Thomas, the Thomas name, English background and then her mother's family, Johnson, came from Norway and the myths and the folktales and old wives tales about everything, were part of the cultural things that you grow up with, but because we were . . . Mormon is so completely the basis of our understanding life, these things all appeared to be Mormonism as a child growing up. So I didn't make a distinction that this was what the Norwegians believed, or this is what the Danes believed or something else. It was all just was Mormonism for me. And my father's family of course, the Smith name, I grew up with a great deal of pride about that, almost a sense of noblesse oblige. . . that here I was, a great grandson of one of the original witnesses, eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon, Samuel Harrison Smith, who was a younger brother to Joseph Smith and then and also one of the six charter members of the church. Even though he had died within a month of his brothers martyrdom at Carthage, Illinois in trying to make a rescue he injured himself and got an infection, of the spleen I would guess, because he died a terrible...pains inside and I think that was probably because of it. And there's very strong evidence that he was alcoholic and he was probably drinking heavily and so had a weakened system that may have exacerbated that all. So he left his family, and the only, he only had one son, Samuel Harrison Bailey Smith and his wife was Mary Bailey and she had died in 1841 and Samuel of course died in 1844. So when Samuel came on west, the family, her family, tried to get him to stay with them but he came west with Brigham Young's pioneer company. Not the original '84s company that Brigham Young led the advance company into the Big into the valley, but when he came back permanently to Salt Lake Valley in 1848 Samuel Harrison Bailey was a young boy of ten years of age. He'd been born in 1838...

MJ: His father was the one who had died of the injury while trying to rescue his brother?

MS: That's right and my grandfather was born on Melbone Creek near Adam on dye Almond, which was again a Mormon site in Missouri at the time of the Missouri persecutions as Mormons identify it and his mother caught cold--it was storming and she was taken out of their house and they burned the cabin down and out of that stress, Samuel, her husband was off getting a wagon to move the family and while he was gone was when the mob attacked. So that's been part of the mythology that I grew up, this heroic performance and then so why my Grandfather came west in 1848 with Brigham Young, and his mothers brothers came through on the California Gold Rush a couple of years later and tried to talk him into going to California. But he decided to stay with the Saints.

MJ: Now, who raised him since he was a boy of ten?

MS: His stepmother. And I think that Charles C. Rich, who was a close friend of Samuel Harrison Smith, my great grandfather, and was one of the prominent church leaders, I think he extended a father hand to him because my Rich County Utah, named for Charles C. Rich, my grandfather went up there and was a sheriff in Rich County and I think that was due to that kind of connection that he had with Charles C. Rich. Many of the settlements were close family and familial groups as well as friends groups or otherwise by connection was made so as you had a lot of people related that went out with these groups rather than selecting them at random. And my father was born in 1895 in Bountiful, Utah to a polygamist marriage. His mother had been married before to Dave Bridge and he was killed and during the prosecution on the polygamist, my grandfather was thrown in the federal prison and served six months, for his conscience' sake, as they used to express it. And he then had his first wife, divorced him, and the second wife who he married in 1880, he married first in 1862, then his second wife in 1880 and because the evidence of his polygamist relationship, he would spend time out at Bountiful and out there he met the Tuttle sisters, Rachel, my grandmother, who was widowed and her sister Claire who had not been married, so in 1886, he asked Grandma Tuttle, so the story goes, for Claire's hand and Grandpa, being a generous man, said, "Rachel doesn't have a husband, why don't you take her too?", so he married both of these women on the same day as his plural wives, and out of that he had two children from Claire, and one child from Rachel, my father. And this was -- Dad was born in 1895 which was five years after the manifesto, so the cohabitation was still going on.

MJ: Explain that, since I'm not sure I understand.

MS: Yeah, cohabitation is where they were living together, cohabiting as husband and wife, even after the manifesto. The manifesto was when the Mormon church, Wilfred Wooder, said in 1890 that the Mormon church would no longer teach the practice of plural marriage.

MJ: But this thing didn't just die out with the Manifesto?

MS: No, no. In fact there was a second Manifesto finally in 1904. Because some of the church leaders, and at that time there were some of the general pillars of the church that were sacrificed. John W. Taylor and Mathias F. Cowley. To give evidence of the fact that the Mormon really was prosecuting, punishing the people who were still practicing polygamy.

MJ: What do you mean sacrificed? How did they sacrifice them?

MS: Well, they were members of the Council of the Twelve. They were dropped from the Council of Twelve and disfellowshipped from the church. And this was the time of the Smoot hearings and in Congress and so on.

MJ: Now, Mathias Cowley was the person for whom Cowley was named?

MS: Cowley, Wyoming was named for Mathias F. Cowley, that's right.

MJ: Was he in that group from 1900-1901?

MS: No, he was not an original colonist up there, but he did go out to the Big Horn Basin. Abraham L. Smoot who was the son of an apostle, Reed Smoot was the driving leader in terms of pulling together and supporting it, and the big leaders in Cowley, Wyoming that I grew up with were Jesse W. Crosby and Samuel Wilcox, Nephi Robertson and William Quaridge ???. All of these of course are common Mormon names if you are familiar with Mormon history.

MJ: OK, now how many kids did your parents have?

MS: OK, my father and mother -- Dad grew up in Byron, Wyoming. Mother's father was the bishop up there part of the time and also a school teacher so Dad and Mother went to school and were taught by her father,

Emmanuel Thomas. Dad never knew his father other than the first six years of his life. He saw him a few times that he could remember and then Dad went on a mission in 1913. He went to Salt Lake to go on a mission and he met his father and spent a couple of days with him.

MJ: Was this because of divorce then, or why didn't he see his father?

MS: Well, because of all the polygamy. The pressure was on so he choose to stay with his second wife, Judy Winters and his third and fourth wives went off on their own; his first wife had divorced him earlier anyway so it was that pressure again on polygamy. I grew up, you see, under the shadow of polygamy even though it was not practiced by my father. My grandfather was a polygamist and my father was an orphan in a sense because his father was a polygamist -- circumstance, that kind of thing so

MJ: He grew up in the shadow then?

MS: It was interesting because there were a number of polygamists in Cowley and it was a secret kind of thing, you know, the aunties and so forth, and you just didn't talk about it. It didn't exist, but everybody knew it existed. They were really bad, but then you could understand because they had married these women legitimately and so forth. And so you really had that kind of a shadowy existence because something just wasn't right over there but as a kid I didn't understand this, you see. I didn't understand what was going on. But looking back now and getting specific information from relatives and other people in the community I look back and realize that's what was causing the situation. So when Dad got home from his mission in 1915, his father died while he was in the mission field, so he never got to see his father after that, but he visited a long time with his father while he was there at the house and his father talked a lot a lot of things, and his father, when he was in the territorial prison, he had a dairy and he left his dairy to his first wife and children to run it while he was in prison, and then he had an arrangement to sell the milk to the general bishop for the tithing office, and the tithing script was going out of circulation at the time, so

MJ: What was tithing script?

MJ: That was instead of money - in lieu of money - a paper money kind of thing. And so instead -- Grandpa agreed to take that tithing script instead of payment and in that way they could keep that medium circulating and work

through it. He was getting ten cents a gallon for the milk and while he was in prison they changed the presiding bishop and the presiding bishop dropped the price from ten cents to five cents a gallon and so Samuel Harrison felt that he had really been wronged. For one, he had a contract with them, and beyond that that it was definite discrimination against him and the impact was on his children and wife having to take that while he was in prison. He tried to get redress with the church and couldn't and wrote and published a pamphlet himself about a plea for justice. His letters and to John Taylor, pointing out this issue. He published it himself so there is somewhat of a tradition of speaking out on conscience' sake that seems to have carried on generation to generation.

MJ: And writing. . .

MS: Yeah, right. Then Dad, when he got home from his mission, he'd been called into the mission field. He said Mother & I started keeping company, was his expression, and Grandpa called me on a mission, and when I got home, he called her on a mission.

MJ: Your Grandpa?

MS: Yeah, my mother's father see. So Mother said that wasn't so, but I think Dad had it figured out. Then the first world war came on and Dad had just gotten a few cows and horses and accumulate a little wealth on his own. He heard one of the stake leaders say we've got some red-blooded boys here hiding behind their mother's skirts and not going off to war, or not volunteering to go to the army, so Dad -- you couldn't talk to him that way so he volunteered for the Army. He hated the Army. He hated in on one hand and on the other he was very proud of the fact that he'd served in the First World War. When Mother came home from her mission in the summer of 1918 she went off to summer school but they'd been corresponding and decided to get married and she came down to Logan, UT and they were married on Dad's birthday, August 6, 1918.

MJ: In Logan or...

MS: In Logan, Utah at the Logan Temple.

MJ: Now how did his father die on a mission? What happened there?

MS: Well, his father just died in Salt Lake City while Dad was on the mission.

MJ: Oh, I see.

MS: My father was on a mission to west Texas. That was a very important thing in Dad's life. He had experiences there that convinced him that finally and ultimately there was a God who took care him in some dire situations. He hiked out through west Texas and he felt he never would have gotten through if it hadn't been for some divine intervention. And that was kind of a rod for him to hold onto in his life -- the struggles and the emotional stresses that he had.

MJ: I can understand that.

MS: That was a powerful experience for him. Dad then went overseas and got to the front lines just at the time of the armistice so he never did fight but could hear the battle and see the casualties of the war but by the time he reached the front lines they had the armistice. Then he came home from that and Dad and Mother -- she was teaching school. Dad got home in 1919 and my brother Ron, the oldest, was born in February 1920.

MJ: They had been married before he went to Europe.

MS: They had been married in 1918 see. Then Fred was born in 1921 in October, Grant in November 1923, and then Rachel in April 1926, and I was born in June 1928, Dean was born in October 27, 1929 - we always said he caused the Great Depression - Clara in February 1932 and Blake January 1934, Alice in June 1936 and Neph in October 1937. They had ten children in the period over 18 years from the birth of the first to the birth of the last one.

MJ: Was your family typical of that area in terms of size?

MS: Well, quite typical. We had neighbors, Uncle Will and Aunt Mary and their combined families were 11, Jamieson's had nine children, neighbors in the area, the Wilcoxs had seven, eight and the Mortonsons had six or seven.

MJ: This all squared with the Mormons.

MS: The Tibbits family, you know had a large family. It was an agrarian community and Dad had eight boys and two girls and that was a real work or labor force.

MJ: Now, whereabouts exactly did you live? Outside of Cowley?

MS: Right, the highway runs through Cowley, running south from Lovell and when it turns it goes north of the city limits, then you turn right out past the cemetery and we lived just a half mile off the main highway. I can remember as a kid, when they got that gravel -- they got it oiled now -- but the spring of the year they got those rains and they got those ruts in there and get in those ruts and like somebody said, choose your ruts well because you're going to be in em the next ten miles. Then, walking back and forth to school.

MJ: How far did you have to walk to school, and don't say five miles -- everybody says five miles.

MS: No, it was just a mile from the school to the house but I can remember during the first and second grade you got out at 2:30 and I was supposed to walk home that mile rather than waiting around that hour and a half for four o'clock dismissal and coming in on the bus. And that seemed like a long way to me then. I remember I could get three quarters of a mile when the 15 minute school bell for recess would ring so it was taking me about 20 minutes which means I was hustling pretty good for a kid.

MJ: What was it like growing up in your family?

MS: Well, it was the depression years. My earliest years are very vague -- we had a house under, we had the soil where the home and corrals were kind of a gumbo, but they build a pond there for stock water cause in the winter time you didn't have any springs or running streams cause it was all irrigated under the ??? canal.

MJ: You didn't have a well?

MS: No, we didn't have a well because the surface water was mineral. You know, you dig down a well that way and it was just mineral, so the pond was an essential thing, and behold east of the pond bank they had put

up the houses. And what the houses were were two boxcars, railroad cars parallel to each other and the space in between they closed in, and I can just barely remember that and things about it, a few things, a very vague memory. That's where I was born and spent the first three years of my life.

MJ: Were you delivered by a midwife?

MS: No, I think Dr. Croft -- not Thomas B., but his father who was Dr. Croft also, but it was a home delivery. All Mother's children were home deliveries, all ten of them. And then the family moved up and I remember shortly after we moved up there, that was when I first became aware of the fact that I was no longer the baby of the family. My brother Dean had been born and I was three years old -- something like that.

MJ: What do you mean, you moved up?

MS: Well, the pond was built on the edge of the hill and we lived below that. So we moved up to the new house was built up where it was more gravelly so it was up on the hill so I imagine the elevation there must have been 20 feet, but it seemed like a hill. I remember my mother and my older sister, Rachel, talking and talked about me not being the baby, and feeling for some reason, pride in not being the baby anymore. Little did I know that was the best status there was. But Dad had not had a father when he was raised up. He had a brother in law who was a pretty severe disciplinarian. Dad's experience with discipline had come out of his military training so he felt discipline, from experience, was what it was about, and also within the teachings of the church, and he repeated often, train up a child in the way he should go so when he's older he won't depart therefrom, and how important it was for parents to train their children in the right way you see. So Dad was a very strict disciplinarian. He was a very angry man at times.

MJ: He believed in corporal punishment then?

MS: Yes, it was not unusual -- I remember him whipping my older brothers, and in some cases my sister and whipping me.

MJ: With a razor strap?

MS: With a razor strap, with reins of a saddle horse, with his belt, with a board, with a willow -- it was very severe discipline and I can remember of

one time in my life when I was about ten, nine or ten years old, that would be 1938, and I don't know why it was focused on me that much, but after you got to be about 13 or 14, Dad, he didn't usually resort to that type of corporal punishment anymore, with me and my older brothers.

MJ: You weren't big enough to challenge him were you?

MS: No, no, still wasn't big enough to challenge him, but something about the way he viewed things, you no longer needed to do that to the child. For some reason or another, you didn't have to use the corporal punishment.

MJ: You mentioned too, last night, that he began to rely on you as you got older.

MS: Yes, but that would have been older than that, with the coming of the second world war, you see. But during this period of time, I mean, by the time I was five years old I was driving a team of horses harrowing the ground that they had plowed with four head of horses. There'd be actually four head of horses on a harrow. I couldn't hook them up by myself, but the person doing the plowing, an older brother was doing the plowing the field with a tractor, could. I can remember plowing with three horses on a two by single bottom plow, not me plowing it, but my brothers, and I find out that Dad had gone to tractors early in the 20's, but with the coming of the Depression he couldn't make the payments of the tractors and he went reverted back to the primitive lifestyle that he know, which is a very typical pattern. That was, Dad reverted to that later on in life as he would get under stress -- he would revert back to a more primitive way of living and so I grew up with horses. Riding horses and working horses -- that was just part of my life.

MJ: How did your mother react to your father's discipline and his complete control of the kids?

MS: Mother herself was a strict disciplinarian herself so in that sense she and Dad were united. Mother resorted to physical punishment too, she just wasn't as severe because she couldn't be. But Mother often reported me to Dad and others of the family members and we were disciplined by Dad based on our not doing what we were supposed to do.

MJ: But Mel, you would think with that uniformity of thought and

discipline that none of the kids would have had any problem with it.

MS: It wasn't a problem of whether or not this was right or whether or not it was fair, at least for me, and I can't speak as thoroughly, because I find that the experiences of life were different for each of us, and the parenting impact was different, but for me, what it did for me was that I was afraid of my father and the fear -- I remember when I was 9 or 10 years old, I thought if I can get through the day without a whipping -- you know, that type of thing. It wasn't because I was a rebellious child -- I just couldn't measure up. I think what this was an expression of was that Dad somehow or other, the frustrations -- the shortness of money during the Depression years, the pressures of a big family, all these things coming on, cause by the time I was ten years old, he had ten children you see. So he had the full load of a family at that time.

MJ: So you're saying he had an anger in him, a frustration --

MS: That's right, and he was taking that out on his children. I've found that out in terms of experiencing my own life with my children, that I was taking my anger and frustrations out, and the pattern of behavior was passed on to my own children and that's a great deal of pain and dysfunction within my own children's lives that is something that I've been working on that's important - - -

MJ: Were there any positive things to come out of this, for example, Martin Luther felt that he could never measure up to God's wishes for him -- he could never do enough good works to make this reconciliation with God, so as a result he did some mighty things, like break away from the church. Do you think that anything positive came out of this?

MS: I want to make a couple of observations. First of all, there was a pattern about discipline that I've been able to look back and see, and one is that Dad's discipline and Mother's discipline differed when it was in the context of the family. When I was off to the mountains or the ranch with my father, or my younger brothers and sisters. Discipline was a totally different situation if Mother was not there. If the family structure was not set up there wasn't the same degree of discipline. The expression of it, physically, was not there, so there was much about the context of family that generated much of that discipline. And Dad behaved as a husband and father when he was in the context of family than when he was just with us and so when I

was riding for cattle in the foothills of the mountains with Dad, it was a good experience. Dad was very emotional and very real in how he related with you, so I picked up that I knew that my father knew that I was a very good person and a very capable person. And I got feedback from him that validated that, particularly as I got older in my teens and high school and so forth where I assumed a lot of responsibility. Now, Mother on the other hand, was very detached and not a warm person. She was an incredible hard worker, you know, producing for those ten kids during the Depression years and just keeping food on and washing the clothes with a scrub board and then an old putt-putt washing machine with a little gasoline motor on it. I remember helping her put the clothes through the wringer and I had a little Band-Aid bandage on my finger you know, and you never had Band-Aids in those days. If you had some stickum plaster wrapped around a piece of cloth around your finger that was your bandage. I was poking, getting the clothes started and it hooked onto my finger and it started pulling my hand through there and I let out a yell and she reacted immediately and pushed the pressure release lever and got the thing stopped or I other hand, was very detached and not a warm person. She was an incredible hard worker, you know, producing for those ten kids during the Depression years and just keeping food on and washing the clothes with a scrub board and then an old putt-putt washing machine with a little gasoline motor on it. I remember helping her put the clothes through the wringer and I had a little Band-Aid bandage on my finger you know, and you never had Band-Aids in those days. If you had some stickum plaster wrapped around a piece of cloth around your finger that was your bandage. I was poking, getting the clothes started and it hooked onto my finger and it started pulling my hand through there and I let out a yell and she reacted immediately and pushed the pressure release lever and got the thing stopped or I'd of been wrung out --

MJ: Wrung out is the word too...

MS: She got done with me. But Mother had a hard time being emotional and being real in a relationship so -- if you performed.

MJ: She didn't have a ????

MS: Well, for whatever reason. I think she had her own issues too. But if you performed, so that Mother could brag about you, she would, but she wouldn't brag about you to yourself, to me she would brag about it too my

brothers and sisters, which angered them. Or she would brag about it to the neighbors or somebody else, but you see, validation didn't come back to me directly cause I might get the big head or might be too proud and you know what I mean? That praising could lead me astray.

MJ: So there weren't any demonstrations of affection.

MS: Very little, the only time I remember my mother holding and hugging me is when we'd go to Sunday school or church and she was checking my ears to see if they were clean and they usually weren't and holding me up tight because a wiggling my head and she'd take her handkerchief and wet it with spit out of her mouth and she'd poke it down in my ear and clean it out. That was ...I can remember the smell and the feel of her holding me on her breast and that type of thing. But that's the only time I remember my mother holding me. In terms of how I put my life together, with Dad's severe discipline it was too risky to just live his way -- to bond to him tightly, so I bonded to my mother. And the feeling was that if I do the right thing, it'll work out and the reason it didn't work out was because I wasn't a good boy, I hadn't tried hard enough, I hadn't worked hard enough, I hadn't, you know, and so forth. The explanation of why things didn't work was because of me.

MJ: But it seems to me that if your father was the ultimate disciplinarian and you went to her for refuge, emotionally or whatever, physically that eventually because of her position she would accede to his demands. In other words, even she wasn't a refuge ultimately, was she? Because if he was after you, he was gonna get you.

MS: Yeah, but it was--- in a strict family there was , I mean Dad supported Mother. He didn't undermine Mother. Mother undermined Dad, she would talk and badmouth my father sometimes, but Dad never did that about Mother. There was a loyalty on his part which I think came out of his relationship with his own mother. And it wasn't a matter of ultimate power. In other words, Mother lived, she maintained her position with her way of doing it, which was kind of withdrawing, but ultimately the power was there.

MJ: She had a means of controlling it.

MS: That's right And ...

MJ: And you went with the controller in this case?

MS: Well, it was safer and finally, yes, that's a keen observation now that I think about it because, see, what I needed was something that was a guarantee and a control -- promises. In the summer of '39 the family, the four older children and the folks went to the World's Fair, in Los Angeles-- or San Francisco, wherever it was.

MJ: '39? Chicago, wasn't it?

MS: No, anyhow, whatever they went to California to the World's Fair. I stayed behind -- I just turned 11 -- they went in August and I turned 11 in June, to run the farm. And I remember when they drove away -- they had a gas pump at the north end of the house -- they filled with gas and they drove off and left me in charge and we had a woman come out who did the cooking and everything, but running the irrigation on a 120 acre farm, all of that was under my jurisdiction. We had about 35 acres of sugar beets and you had to be sure you didn't run the water too long on that alkali soil or the minerals would come up, you know, and you'd ruin your crop. But there was no question in my mind about whether I'd be able to do it, whether I could do it right, you know and that type of thing. I did that. They were gone about 10-12 days and I irrigated the whole farm, some of it twice -- the alfalfa and the beets and I think we had a little corn and grain. I remember when they got back I got praised quite highly. I got some criticism because there was two or three beet rows down at the bottom there were dry, you know, if the job wasn't perfect there was always room for criticism and always a need for people to be critical. That was the case in my mind. Any imperfection in myself or in my children, I focused on that.

MJ: Rather than focus on the good things.

MS: Right, it was part of that religious background "Be ye therefore perfect..."

MJ: "Even as they Father in heaven..."

MS: And if you weren't, what you ought be doing is not taking pride in what you have, but working on the imperfection. And so that was the focus. Out of that I learned that I got recognition when I performed and took responsibility. And so I became very responsible. Now, see in '39 Roland

went off to school, college. The war came in '41 and in '42 Fred was off to college, Graham went off to college and they all went in the Navy which left me -- I was the oldest one -- I was the oldest one home and Grant came back helping with the sugar beet harvest one year during the war '43 I guess it was, but I was the big boy and I was kind of the foreman, the superintendent. Dad was buying and selling cattle a lot and he'd -- so I took charge of it and took charge of the German and Italian prisoners that we'd go up to the Deaver camp and pick up that would work in the beet fields. We'd contract to harvest other peoples crops. It was patriotic as well as a way to make extra money. I'd stay out of school. The year I was in the eighth grade I stayed out 6 weeks in the fall of the year to help with the harvest and then six weeks in the spring of the year putting the crop in. I remember my eighth grade teacher coming to me and they used to give a scholarship to high school out of the eighth grade, you know, who was high and so forth. They announced that Jesra Asay who was a good friend of mine was the high boy, see. When we took the examination I scored high enough to pull me up just a little higher than him. I remember Charles Marchon who was a good teacher and an interesting character -- he had a statement, You can make lumber out of timber, but you can't make timber out of lumber. I mean, he had lots of sayings like that, but that's one that stuck with me. Anyway, he came to me and said, "Melvin, I'm really embarrassed and I've got a problem here. I've already announced that Jesse -- but you actually scored high enough that you beat him out." I said it was not problem for me. I could be gallant -- that was part of the responsibility. So anyway, then when I was in my junior year, no senior year in high school, because I was a good basketball player. I remember the superintendent who was also the coach, the ag teacher -- Vernon C. Convy -- and I pulled into the filling station on the main street of Cowley and was filling up with gas and checking the tires and so forth and he came by. He said, "Are you coming to school this year?" I said that yeah, I was planning to, and he said, "Well, maybe we won't allow you in." There was this cocky -- in terms of response - I said, "Well, if you don't take, I guess Deaver will." Well, I knew that I was important enough on the basketball team --- it was his way of saying I hadn't been to school hardly at all, which was true. But I was a good student, you know, very able learner, but ...

MJ: Did you have leanings toward to high school? You went to Deaver then, or Cowley?

MS: I went to Cowley High School. That is an interesting question -- the

impact of people in your lives. Margarite Convy, the superintendents wife, also taught history and Spanish. She was an excellent teacher and a very personable woman. When I went on for my degrees I took my Bachelor's in Social Studies in secondary education and I took my Masters in American studies, both from the University of Wyoming and finally went on for my Ph.D. in History at Brigham Young University and I took a minor in Spanish and my major in History. And I told Marguerite, you know, you really had an impact on me. She was proud of her Doctoral student but it was real and why did I move that direction? I don't know really. When I started college at Northwest Community College in Powell John T. Hinckley, who was from Cowley and I knew his father and so on, but in terms of specifically gravitating that way, he's the one who moved me into History because he was an excellent Political Science and History teacher and I just found it fascinating with the information that was available through that.

MJ: Were you interested -- did you sit at like your grandfather's knee and become interested in storytelling as a part of history?

MS: No, but my father was a great storyteller. His stories always had a moral to them, but Dad was a great storyteller. And in that sense, Dad was very giving, he was very personable and real and Dad liked to have fun. When we were growing up it wasn't unusual for us to put 6-8 kids on a horse, even if we had the workhorses and two or three people stacked on one of those old work mares and we'd go off for a picnic. Mother'd make a lunch, so there was that involvement. Dad was a great storyteller about when he was growing up and so forth, when there was nearly always a moral to them, but he was simply a great storyteller. But I never really became a good storyteller myself.

MJ: So your history has tended to be a little more analytical rather than narrative?

MS: That's true. You know, the whys and wherefores of things and the big answers, I've always been interested in that kind of thing.

MJ: You were curious -- is that may be one reason why you went into history? You wanted to understand why and how things came about?

MS: Right. I've always -- the way I identify it, I was always looking for the answers. And there were -- I don't remember formulating it as, well, a

guy ought to be asking the big questions or anything, but why? And, you see, as a faithful Latter Day Saint, growing up in the church and in that reference, they had all the answers, where did you come from -- you were a child of God and you came down here for the purpose of getting a body and working out your salvation and going back, and peopling worlds for eternity if you're faithful. That all just made sense to me -- Abraham had done it and all the prophets down through time -- that's what it was all about. So, a large family -- Abraham was -- the blessings that God gave Abraham that his posterity be a numerous as the sands of the seashore, see. I can remember my father quoting that, so his 9-10 children, my nine children, all that was a pattern of seeing life and reality in that reference of Mormonism.

MJ: Now, we haven't talked much about Mormonism as you grew up. How important was that in your life?

MS: It was very important. It was a social thing. In other words, the church gave structure to social activities and it was very prominent in the classroom. There was prayer in the classroom and the teachers were all Mormons. I don't think I had a non-Mormon teacher. And those value systems were very prevalent. But I could get away to go to Primary, which was the young people's organization. I could get away from work to go to Primary and get a chance to be with your friends. Otherwise you had to work. And a chance to go to Sunday School and to go to church. You know, it was a way of breaking out of what was a very heavy work schedule. That was just part of it. And then so I went. The teachings of the church for me -- it gave answers and I had answers to things I didn't even have questions for. Much of it was that way and I found questions developing later on. The answers were about what life was about. Why did it storm and wash out somebody's field of crops or wash out the dam? Well, it didn't have to do with the meteorological activity -- it had to do with whether or not some person was righteous. Why did the grasshoppers hit your crop? To test you or because you hadn't been faithful enough or had you paid your tithing. All of these kinds of things -- there were Mormon answers to all of these things and I bought them and I'd hear people bearing testimony that when they planted their grain they'd go out and bless the crop and dedicate it to the Lord and they'd raised all these bushels and so forth and to me you see, the answer lay not in more testing and fertilizing and careful irrigation and planting at the right time, but in righteous living. That's where you got the answer, even in the raising of the crops. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, and we're stewards and if he'll bless you, you see.

MJ: But if you're righteous liver, you're going to be a person who's very aware of what's around you so you can be this proper steward and so it would seem to me...

MS: That's too rational an approach for me when I was growing up...

MJ: I was going to ask you about that too. When did you start questioning? All this stuff you just took for granted I take it.

MS: Yes, and I can remember my father's old teacher, Heber Snell, coming up and visiting with Dad. He taught at the Bighorn Academy which became the Cowley High School, but the church set it up as the Bighorn Academy. They set up a whole bunch of academies in the 1890's to 1910, until public high school. Heber Snell was his name. He later went to BYU, but he was one of these educated Mormons who went to a theological seminary and got a liberal theological education, you see, and so, they got into a discussion. My oldest brother, Roland, who for some reason or other was much more questioning from day one it seemed like -- what made the difference, I don't know -- was asking questions and raising questions about the flood, whether or not it actually covered the whole thing, see. I'm what, 16 or 17 years old when this discussion is going on and I'm reading myself and I'm taking seminary and so on, but I found myself immediately jumping in to defend the very conservative interpretation of this you see. It had to be so because the earth has to be baptized by water -- you've got to have it all covered you see. That it was logical or not logical was not the issue. From my reference it has to be, it was logical you see.

MJ: And that goes back to what we were talking about when we were doing dishes her and last night. I wish you'd make a statement about that, these opreorie??? I mean---

MS: Premises about which, yeah. That uh, well what I found for myself, I used to wonder, how can somebody be so logical as I began to question. I mean, you know, much later in life. How can somebody be so smart and so logical, and yet so blindsided on some of the religious issues in terms of the kinds of arguments that they make. I began to analyze this for myself and what I found that, within me, that the mind works from knowns and from assumptions and builds its case from a conclusion, it becomes a premise, from an assumption it becomes a premise, or from a presumption it becomes

a premise on an opriorie base and you make the argument.

And if you accept the premise, then the argument is very logical. I look at very religious people and if you buy their assumption, or premise to begin with it follows logically as it did in my life that the reason this man had a good crop was not that he was such a good farmer, but the real reason was because he was righteous. He had dedicated it to the Lord and the Lord either inspired him to know what to do and all these things, you see.

MJ: So if you were unrighteous, you didn't have the luck, or if you didn't have the luck, you weren't righteous.

MS: Yeah, and most of that I went into denial on, because to see an unrighteous man prosper, in the book of Mormon, reference again, let the righteous prosper and the wicked will be destroyed, you know, in their pride. I would just go into denial in terms of thinking it through. If there's a logic to this, then why isn't it working type of thing. It was amazing how many situations I would simply cut off the logical extension...in other words I would shut down and rationalize why it was the way the Church and my family said it was as far as the religious belief was concerned.

MJ: So in other words, maybe he was, although he had a good crop, he was catching hell in another way that we didn't know about or maybe later on.

MS: Right, right. And look at his kids---or that type of thing. His son smokes and you see, this type of thing. You see. it's rationalization. Someway you have to balance your issue out, so you build up rationalization. And I grew up -- growing up Mormon to me, anybody who smoked was a bad person...who drank was a bad person. My father was very much under the word of wisdom and I picked up that prejudice against people which was very unfortunate for me. I didn't like that. Later on I became ... but it was a long time before I could really own the bias I had there.. On the other hand I've never tasted tea or coffee or smoked a cigarette or drunk any kind of liquor you see, because Dad said to us, "when you're 18 if you can honestly tell me you haven't done any of those things, I'll give you a gold watch." Which in those days was about a \$50 thing ... and then he changed it to a heifer calf, which is a little more...And I remember dealing with that. We had a little Shetland pony and I remember riding her home from the Cowley store and came and it was the main street in town and a block down, the old church at the south end of that same

block, and then right across the road was the elementary school. A lot of times we'd tie our house along the street there, next to the ditch -- you know, ditches run along the street in a Mormon town -- and I tied her up there and make that last block. There was a hitching post there and they used to ride right up to the south of the main street, then walk across the street to the store. Anyway, I remember coming across that ditch and seeing a pack of cigarettes. Getting off, picking them up, and taking one out and putting it into my mouth. I guess if I'd had a match, I'd have tried one right there. But you're going to have to talk ... you're going to be asked when you're 18 and you're going to have to lie about it or whatever. And just say ahhhhhhh .. in other words, talking myself out of the curiosity. I've been grateful for the fact that I never got into those types of things. Drinking was never a temptation for me. I just never liked the smell and that was never a temptation. So that was never an issue for me. But the cigarettes. I tried to pump wood, the roots of willows, hay leaves in a piece of catalog paper -- It was probably 10 times as bad for you as a good clean cigarette.

MJ: Yeah, the ink would be pretty bad.

MS: But at least I never got into that. There was a bias about people who smoked and drank that was a long time for me to overcome. I still don't like to be around the smoking environment for health reasons, but for the purposes of the morals of the person doing it, I'm over that, but it took a long time.

MJ: Sort of interesting now that your very concerned about your body and your health, how these things ultimately worked out for the best -- avoiding smoking, drinking, caffeine or whatever.

MS: Yeah, it's interesting that you would trigger that, on the other hand, my Dad was always overweight. He was about 5' 9.5" tall and weighed 220 to 235 most of the time that I knew him. My younger brothers dad was a foot racer when he was in the Army. He competed one of the top in his company and brigade you know. And...

MJ: Your dad's younger brother was?

MS: No, dad was. My dad, and my older brothers tell me about seeing, when they were little, horses breaking out across the hill, and him breaking out and heading them, at an angle and just obvious that he was fast, but he

was so heavy that it always made him appear older in terms of performance, than he actually was. So here was a case in terms of health -- you saw a picture of me in 1965 and how heavy I was at the time -- that was just sort of the way to do. When I went into the mission field, I was 20 years old in 1948, and I weighed about 155-60 pounds, just hard as a rock. I remember when Dr. Croft was giving me a physical and was poking me, you know, muscle tone, and said how hard my muscles were. I was breaking horses and if there's anything that'll tone you up it's breaking horses because you've just got to be right on the edge all the time to stay ahead of that horses movements and within four months in the mission field I'd put on 20 pounds so I jumped to 180 and eventually to 185 pounds.

MJ: Where was your mission?

MS: In western Massachusetts -- it was the New England Mission. Esteel With ??? Young was my mission president. He was one of the general authorities - the seven presidents of seventy -- and I was out there from June of 1948 to August 1950 and the Korean war was on when I got home, it started in June of 50. When I got home I decided to go into ranching to not go to war. Rather than going on to school. I hadn't gone to school out of high school. I'd decided to work on the family farm, you know, it was sort of a family tradition to help out in the family with the younger kids. I was never one to do things half-way. Some of my older brothers stayed home one year so I stayed home two. And I had a scholarship to the University of Wyoming out of High School. There was no reason in the world not to go, other than that mentality, that fixation about it, you see.

MJ: You were being a good boy.

MS: Yeap, so then I went on my mission and when I got home my brother Grant had come back from his mission and was going to graduate in December of that year, so then he and Dad and I were going to form a ranching partnership and started that and I decided after a year, year and a half of that that I just had to get out of there.

MJ: Why? What happened?

MS: I just, I mean I just couldn't work with Dad. It just wasn't that Dad was a hard person to work with, it was who I was. And I was not free enough to be myself around him. He was too strong a personality for me

having coming...even though I wasn't afraid of him physically or otherwise. Psychologically though, he had taken my power away -- the big man beating up on the little kid and I had never worked through to finally reclaim that until this last year through this workshop that I finally went to. And to see that actually happen.

MJ: So you, at some point, made up your mind that this was something you weren't going to do.

MS: Yeah, Right and I couldn't just go to school or I'd be drafted so I joined the Navy. It was a safe way, you see. For me, I needed, the work -- I could work myself to death. I became ill, literally, became a workaholic type of behavior. But you got validation by doing. I was a human doing more than a human being. And so going into the Navy and the challenge of doing that -- it'd keep me out of the trenches of the Korean War, so that's what I did. I joined the Navy in March of 1952 and got out in January of 1956 -- the end of January and started my college training at Northwest Community College and took three semesters up there and in the fall of 1957 went down to the University.

MJ: Just three semesters?

MS: UM HUM, at Northwest Community College.

MJ: Why not four?

MS: I took one full year, but one semester in Feb. of 56 and then went the next full year, so that gave me three semesters, then I just went to the University of Wyoming in the Fall of 57.

MJ: You could have finished up at Northwest, though, couldn't you?

MS: Yeah, but I'd have had to take a full semester, then would have had to move to the University, you see, cause you could only get four semesters.

MJ: I see. At that time did you declare your major?

MS: Yeah, vocational agriculture. I was going -- I started out in vocational agriculture. I figured you know, a farm was a good place to raise a family. The important thing in life was to have a good family and have good

children and so vocational agriculture -- get a little farm, teach a little school, the two would mesh. I could make a living at that and it'd be a good place to raise my kids. I figured if I could make \$5000 with a little farm I'd be in good shape.

MJ: That's amazing. You were locked into the system.

MS: Oh yeah, totally locked into the system.

MJ: Psychologically. Do you want to take a quick break?

BREAK

MJ: Mel, lets talk about the University of Wyoming and your academic career there under Dr. Larson I assume?

MS: Well, T. A. Larson was head of the history department at the time.

MJ: This was what year?

MS: I went down there in 1957 -- interestingly enough when I got out of the Navy I had separation pay -- \$2500-2700 saved up which was pretty good and I had the GI bill and with the three children coming along I was doing pretty good.

MJ: Now wait a minute - we skipped something entirely. You had three children?

MS: Well, you see, I got married in 1952 while I was in the Navy to Marlene Threet. I was stationed in Washington, DC When I went in the Navy I went to San Diego to boot training and when I got a chance to go to fire control technician school which radar and electronic school in Washington DC - I went back there in June of '52 and Marlene and I had been dating for a year and a half or so off and on. We got engaged when I went home from boot camp, unofficially. That was in May of 52 and then she came back in the fall -- September of 56. She thought about going to school in Washington DC., But basically she came back there so we could be together, but we formalized our engagement and came back home in December and got married the 30th of December of 1952 in the Idaho Falls temple. And then we had our first child, Heman was born in October of 53

and I went from there back to Boston to put the USS Wilkinson after I got out of school, which was 44 weeks, to put the USS Wilkinson into commission, so I knew another 15 months or more before I ever got out to sea. I had time then with my family -- this was the rationale for going that way. And so we put the ship in commission and I traveled to Cuba and to the Caribbean area and also to northern Europe and up and down the East coast so overall the Navy was a good experience for me. I took Marlene home in April of 55 because I had to go overseas on a cruise and we were expecting our second child, so she had Dion, the oldest girl, was born in Lovell, Wyoming where her folks lived and my folks lived in Cowley, a neighboring town, and then I came home in September and picked her and the babies up and we went back to Boston until I got out the next January, and then we had a daughter born in September of 56. In the summer of 57 we were going to make all this money in the gold field in Searchlight, Nev. These promoters -- supposedly this guy had developed a special kind of chemical formula that would allow you to mix these chemicals which were normally were very volatile and explosive which would allow them the processing of these low grade ores and you could get this very fine platinum and gold out of these low grade ores down there, see, so I was a monkey hauling those rocks in and putting them through the crusher.

MJ: After you got out of the Navy?

MS: Yeah

MJ: How did you ever get talked into that?

MS: Well, it's one of those things that deferring - you know the leaf system . . . My sister, Clara, who was a good promoter, talked about it and my first reaction was, and even with a church reference, was not -- this just doesn't make sense. But it sounded so good, these guys talked about all this wealth - - they'd be able to raise this money and people would be able to do for their children and give money to the church and some way or other, if we're going to usher in the millennium by the year 2000, well we gotta have the money to do it. I began to create visions in my head that just wouldn't quit. And I went down there and was on the spot and still could not see through that this was just a promotion. In other words, I was just in such a state of denial about the things I was seeing. Because the dream was what was my premise.

MJ: They took advantage of your labor then.

MS: Oh, yeah. And so I ended up, when I went back to school at the University of Wyoming in the fall of 1957 I mean, I was really broke. I'd spent about \$1500 that I had invested plus I didn't have any wages for the summer out of that.

MJ: You didn't?

MS: No, and my brother -- my dad owed me some money and as my share of payment for taking of my brothers cattle, see, and because dad was unwilling to meet his obligation to Grant and pay Grant for the share with which Grant could have paid me. But Grant accepted the obligation so he gave me some of the money that he owed, that dad owed him, you see, he accepted that responsibility. That was Grant all over. He was just one those incredible big brothers that, you know, you just dearly love him.

MJ: Why didn't you have any wages from the summer?

MS: Because I was investing my wages -- you're going to get 5 - 10 to one for everything you put into it, so why take a buck now?

MJ: This whole scheme blew apart then?

MS: Oh, yeah, (laughter). I was in such a state of denial, just seeing the principles drive up in these Cadillacs and some way or other, you know, you know what I mean??? But the dream was so big you just didn't want to blow it apart.

MJ: Let's step back a moment in time now and talk about your wife and how you chose her or how she chose you -- how the two of you came together. What were the circumstances of your marrying Marlene?

MS: Well, I'd dated steady, you know, one gal during high school and the year after high school, Alise Welch, who was very popular and a very pretty girl. But she was two years younger than me, which seemed to me to be about the right age. All that was proper. Very you, know, popular and a good student and everything.

MJ: A Mormon girl?

MS: Oh yes, I don't think they had anything but Mormon girls in Cowley - at least I wouldn't have considered anything but a Mormon girl. And that, she just concluded really that she needed to get - both of need to get -- and she broke it off. That was pretty hard on me -- I was pretty insecure about it. And I met another girl, Phyllis Agaard, and dated her for part of a year before I went to the mission field, then wrote to her for the two years I was in the mission field. She really was a nice girl from Burlington -- a beautiful blond girl. And when I got home again from the mission it was a terribly difficult time for me -- the adjustment back to civilian life. And the whole thing and I just didn't know really what I wanted to do, what I ought to do, how to run my life. There was all of this thing, if you live right, you sleep and pray hard enough, it's all going to work out. And so you know, I broke off with her and I still don't feel good about -- I wasn't fair and I wasn't honest enough to say Hey, I'm so confused and I don't know I'm doing. You're better off -- I'd feel better about you if you'd go on a mission, so I talked her into going on a mission. She did -- she went on a mission to Denmark. While she was gone I started dating Marlene and the reason I started dating Marlene was she was very active in the church and younger still, instead of being two years as were Phyllis and Alise, she was an additional two years young ♦
er, nearly five years younger than me, there again it was more secure. I felt more in control and sure of myself.

MJ: Why did you feel more secure with her, after all, this other girl had just left. You talked her into going on a mission and then you started dating Marlene. Was there a change in you?

MS: No. It was a way of not facing up to some issues about myself. This girl was more her own self than Marlene was. Marlene was very into doing what she was supposed to, see, so I remember the first time I saw her she spoke in conference at seventeen years old, and won second place in the er, nearly five years younger than me, there again it was more secure. I felt more in control and sure of myself.

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MJ: It was what she represented.

MS: She spoke in conference, she'd been successful in state competition. You see what I mean? Measurable reasons that this person is OK. I mean, see the performance? OK. That type of thing. And she was very pretty, very attractive, very sexy. Had a beautiful voice and we'd sing together. And a friend of mine, Garner Harston and neighbor, cousin was dating her best friend who played the piano, so the four of us would get together and double date and that type of thing, and Marlene just, I mean she just simply appeared to be infatuated and couldn't live without me and that was pretty secure for me in where I was, in my psychological needs because out of my, I've discovered since, that out of my growing up with Mother's inability to really express love, and loving when I was a little child, I'm sure an abusive father that What I concluded was I better find someone who needed me, particularly in a primary relationship with a woman, to find somebody who needed me and I knew I could do it if they needed me I could take care of them. And mother, that was what mother expected me to do and dad to do, that's what she wanted, was somebody to take care of her. The reason she had problems, the message I got as a kid growing up, I didn't realize it at the time, was the reason I've got problems is because of your father. I bought Mother's story. Somebody like Marlene -- if there were problems it was because I wasn't doing enough, I was asking the question the wrong way, I raised my voice, or I did something that was causing her problems. You see, I was taking responsibility for it, as I was for my mother. And yet, on the other hand, Marlene, in terms of validating me, she just couldn't live without me and was very affectionate and warm and all those things.

MJ: And you needed somebody to validate you.

MS: And where I was in my life at the time, she did. There was a degree of rationality in my selecting her though. And that was, I don't know just where it came from with raising livestock, but in terms of what kind of a mother, in terms of begetting and having children, in which would she be

able to have children, and would she be genetically a good mother, and so forth, and it's proven to be very much that case. We've got, our kids and their physical prowess, their competitiveness and so forth, everything, intelligent, so that part proved to work out very well. I look back and say, hey, that part of my life was successful.

MJ: This is like, you're saying this was a mini-study in genetics ... picking out good stock.

MS: Right, exactly and that was as rational as I could go about it. I remember going to my mother and father with, not just exactly direct question who to marry, and realizing I couldn't get anything out of them unless they had a strong bias against, which with a lot of people they did, why, they weren't any more rational about the things...than I was. So, we came home from Washington DC and got married in December and went back and moved back up to Boston when I got that opportunity. When I graduated from fire control technician school I was at the top of the class so I got to select the ... I got the choice of all the billets which were available. And what I was doing was trying to pick one that would give me time with my family and keep me from combat. Very frankly, that was to me it made sense so I went that way. I knew it would take quite awhile to get that ship in commission. It took longer even than we expected so. It proved to be a good experience. It was back in my mission territory so I was able to go out and visit some of the people I'd know in the mission field.

MJ: You said earlier that the Navy was a good experience for you. Was it good just in logistics that it provided you opportunities that it allowed you to do what you wanted to do or was it good in that it was a mind-expanding experience too?

MS: Well, in a sense it was all of those things. I got to travel quite a lot around the U.S. and in Europe, a cruise to Northern Europe, Denmark and Scotland and England.

MJ: Now, you had been on a mission?

MS: Right. To New England, western Massachusetts.

MJ: Then, you had gotten out of the Cowley area?

MS: Right, right. Yeah, but the fix of mind for me -- I went out to teach, but not to be taught. So, when I was talking to the professors at Williams College, I mean I was not there to learn something in that sense, I was there to spread the gospel. And I couldn't escape that and when I was in the Navy, I was so concerned about being a good Mormon, that was what I should be, that was my mission in life, but also it was a way of being protected against, you know, shipwreck or hazards plus the moral challenges one might have to deal with and I'd been through the temples. I had my temple garments and I tried to wear them when I was in the Navy even though it generated a lot of curious questions and looks and people making some fun of me. In fact, I bought nylon ones so I could wash them and dry them quick dry - hang them on the line and one pair came up missing and I don't know whether they took them to the commanding officer and said we've got a weirdo in there or not, but I said to myself though, rather than, this is not right, the garment should be exposed to that sort of thing, rather saying this doesn't make sense. So then what I did was wear regular Navy underwear and put the markings in the Navy underwear and found out that that was within church policy. It was still an acceptable way of doing it.

MJ: Then you did take some static for being a Mormon?

MS: Oh, yes, I remember dressing and getting ready to come home on leave at Christmas time. And putting them on. "Hey, you guys, look what Smith's wearing!" I mean I was big and stout and then I could have throttled that guy.

MJ: Well, anyway, you did travel a little bit like you say.

MS: Yeah, I got to New Orleans and to Savannah Georgia, New York City, you know, just cruising. Then Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Santiago and Havana. That was a good experience. Then, you know, traveling across the country. And then I got my GI bill which was my key to going on, I got nearly five years of education -- 4 1/2 years of education out of that.

MJ: At the University of Wyoming. Why did you decide to go to UW?

MS: Well, first of all, I was from Wyoming. Then, I had a scholarship which paid my tuition at NW Community College, then at UW and it just made sense to me. Then, there was a loyalty -- I mean I was from Wyoming, you know and I've always been proud of that and felt bonded to

Wyoming. In some ways, when I think about being bonded to a geographic location it was Cowley Wyoming until I went back there in the fall of '87 and when I went back I went out to the farm, I was staying with some friends, James and Opal Harston???, and I went out there and the old farm home, they were using it for seasonal labor uses. I went in and was trying to recall the feelings and so forth I had about the place. I guess it was the fall of '88. And I got in touch with those feelings. I realized it was a depressed...I didn't feel good about myself. Then I said, geez, Mother used to cook those hotcakes, we played Ping-Pong on the kitchen table and then opened up, that big family, and monopoly. I was a basketball star, student body president...I was calling up deliberately those memories and they were positive but the feeling was still there. I said to myself, why am I feeling this way. I went through Golden CO and visited with my older brother Grant and then Ron in Denver on my way back east to see my daughter and as we were talking I got an insight about it. In the reading I'd been doing, the reading about children, the thinking of children, they tend to think linearly, in a straight line, you know, if Dad's mad, I've been mad. They take the blame. If mother said, I'm mad, rather than mother's can be sad. I use a pen like this and hold it in the horizontal as meaning okness. Feeling OK - anything above the horizontal is OK, anything below the horizontal is not OK. So here the world wasn't going the way it was supposed to be. Mother wasn't happy, the promises. If you're good, it'll work out and so what I was doing in order to make it -- I was saying there was something wrong with me and I was holding myself in a belief or punishment system which made mother and her belief system better. I said to myself, Mother was just Mother, and literally I moved myself up to the level and moved her back down to the toe level where she wasn't bigger than life, she was just life and moved myself up there horizontally. With that, literally, that feeling of pain and depression dissipated just like that. It was a belief system corrected. I made the connection by that metaphor.

MJ: While you were in Cowley?

MS: No, I'd gotten the feeling in Cowley, but I was driving north of Denver, right up on the Nebraska border. I can tell you right where I was. And I got that insight. Which is interesting, you see. Then I could look back and the next year when I went up I said to myself, You know, I'm ready to say good-bye to Cowley. I had had real good experiences with people up there. I said it's not saying good-bye to the people, it's saying good-bye to the value system, belief system about what reality is, all of these things that

someway I was still trying to hold onto. The promise that the good guys will win and the bad guys...you know, I watched cowboy movies. I thought it was just escape -- hey, the good guys win, see.

MJ: Yeah, it was a reinforcement for everything you'd picked up before.

MS: Right, I used to read -- that was the type of validation I was looking for.

MJ: In order to get to these periods in your thinking, I think now we should wrap up your education and sort of take the chronology from the University of Wyoming under Dr. Larson, to BYU.

MS: OK, T.A. Larson was the head of the department and the man assigned to be my -- I got one of the William Robertson co-fellowships. It was the first year they gave them so I was in there with guys from UCLA, from Dartmouth,

MJ: What year was that?

MS: In 1959, fall of 1959. And I mean, I had this broad background, but hardly any upper division classes in history or literature or anything because I was taking a social studies approach with two minors. A minor in Spanish and I thought I'd get on in Mathematics with my radar and electronics training in the Navy see, so I could get a job in the secondary schools if I could get my Masters and Ph.D., so this, my grades, I graduated with a 3.92 GPA in my undergraduate program, so I was carrying at least 20 hours because they'd pay for the full 20 hours. One semester I took 20 hours of classwork and four hours of correspondence and working 25-35 hours a week at the Swanson Lumber Company, and I remember, Gene Cottlemeyer, my advisor, going to him one day and I'd made the Dean's list and then the President's list. And he said, Well, Melvin, I've seen just as good of grades as this, (Because I had a 4.0 on 24 hours) and he said I've seen as good of grades as this, and as many hours as this, but this the most hours of that grade I've ever seen, you know. You see, that was some way I could measure performance and that validated that I was OK. I still didn't feel OK, but in terms of measurement it was there.

MJ: By other standards that had been set, by everybody else....

MS: Yeah, I could see that, but I still didn't feel it was enough -- I still didn't feel OK inside and that was the thing that eventually I had to take care of and was able to do. So I interviewed on jobs when I was getting my Master's. I was offered a job at Anaheim, CA. I figured I could go to UCLA and get my Ph.D. But T. A. Larson had gone up to NW community college to .. as a part of the accreditation team and learned that they were looking for an American history and English teacher. Well, I had American studies which was history and English. And he knew John Hinckley and John Hinkley knew me, I'd had classes from him -- we were both from Cowley and John said, you know, we're looking for somebody and he said have you thought about Melvin. He came back and said they were interested in getting somebody, why don't you write to them, so I did and was offered the job. So I went right into, with my Masters, into college level teaching. While I was at Northwest College I taught two courses in freshman English, world civilization then John Hinckley taught American History. Anyway, I taught 16 hours - I don't remember what the other one was. I taught Spanish year with my minor in Spanish. I had a real good accent from this Marguerite Convy and I used to teach in the labs there in the University of Wyoming - I had the minor in Spanish.

TAPE 2

15 July 1990

Continuing Mel Smith, Mt. Pleasant Utah

MS: One year I had to teach this course in Spanish and I'd been used as a lab instructor at UW because I had a good accent due to the fact that this Marguerite Convy spoke Spanish very well and when she took her degree at International University in Mexico City -- her Master's Degree, and she said it was interesting. She understood, she was raised in Mexico part of the time. She said they were debating her qualifications and she could understand what they were saying and one of them would keep saying, but she speaks the language so well and she knew that's what pulled her through. But learning from her, I picked up a good accent and I was in Mexico City in about '81 and talking to a cab driver, you know, and where I had a chance to speak it and he said, you really have a good accent. Anyway, I felt those students got shortchanged by my teaching them Spanish. We'd go through lots of lab exercises and all, but...

MJ: I doubt it, you probably approached your course work up there the

same way that you approached it any other way. You probably put in a lot of hours of preparation.

MS: Yes, but I just didn't have the facility to be comfortable to speak and carry on the dialogue with them. Hopefully it didn't damage them permanently. Anyway...

MJ: You were up there for what years?

MS: That was in 1960, fall of 1960 and I got my Master's in August 1960. I started school in Feb. of '56, so in four and half years I'd gone through the Master's, going year round, except for the summer of '57.

MJ: Had you thought, when you got up to Powell, Mel, that that was it for you, you were on the road to the career that you really wanted?

MS: Yes, I knew that I wanted to be a teacher. And still, there's no question that teaching is the thing for me, whatever form it takes or whatever vehicle I use, that I am a teacher. It really is very much a part of me, and I see that even now, with my writing and my communication with my children and other things. I like to teach and I'm a good teacher I felt. But what bothered me was that I knew that I didn't have the kind of depth, subject-wise, even though I could get prepared, I could take them through, I could test them, I could motivate them, within the classes, I didn't feel like I really knew what I was talking about.

MJ: You were too Shallow?

MS: Or why I was teaching history, even, see. And so I remember talking to, I think it was Dr. John Marvel who came up from the college of education and talked for commencement or something like that, and I asked him for some advice about what I ought to do. He said I you're satisfied teaching the junior college level, that's good enough, you don't need the Ph.D., see, but I'm sure part of this at least was that old sense of insecurity, there's more you can, therefore you ought to do more. That was the drive behind me and so here I am with seven kids, in 61 I go to Arizona University and Tanna, my daughter was born down there, and I came back in the summer of 62 I went to BYU and the summer of 63 I went back down to BYU and I got a scholarship and a fellowship. The two of them combined came to about \$1800, and I've the 8th child, Rinnel?? was born in '63,

August of '63.

MJ: Why did you go to Arizona, or was it Arizona State?

MS: I went to Arizona State because Marlene's folks lived down in Arizona at the time. And I liked the desert southwest, and I thought about maybe getting a job down there, so there was that part of it too.

MJ: So you went and enrolled in the University?

MS: Arizona State University, I went to summer school. I took ten hours at Arizona State University. I got into Geography. I had a geography class and you know, I thought about Latin American History or something as a possible field. But eventually that Geography class led me to a minor in geography in my Ph.D. program so...it was my minor field. Then I came back in the summer of '63 and went to BYU and did my course work in a two year period, went through my comprehensives, everything ABD, all by the dissertation by the summer of '65 and I interviewed and put out applications for jobs and I had this contact through the church. I was very active in the church, teaching Sunday school class and high priest class, very active and devout in my religious beliefs.

MJ: Is that why you went back to BYU -- why did you leave Arizona?

MS: OK, I went back to BYU was that it was cheaper than Arizona would have been unless I could have gotten a good scholarship. And not only that, I felt it was a safe place to go. There at Northwest I was teaching early morning seminary the first year, then they asked me to set up a part-time institute program at Northwest Community College, so I did, then I taught that class for two years. At BYU I could go to summer school and they would pay my tuition for one term if I'd take two hours of teaching religion in college or something like that, so that was the economics of that, and I just felt it was safe, see. So all the time during my education and experience I was reading the Book of Mormon, a chapter or so every day. I've read the book of Mormon about twelve times, all the way through and it was that kind of pattern all the way through. My living of my life was very ritualized in terms of family, prayer, private prayer, Marlene and I would pray at night before we went to bed, and sometimes together when we got up in the morning. I mean, it was a very - I was trying to live the way I ought to live so I could be a good person, so that my children would be raised the way

they should be raised and the whole thing you see. I really believed it and I really tried to practice it the best I could. And I'd see my brothers making more money and other things and I 'd say to myself, But what's the most important thing -- Seek ye first the kingdom of God. And then all these things will be added so that's the way I was going. It was an indirect way of achieving it so while I was at BYU was that there was a great hullabaloo going on at that time with the John Birch Society and it had shown up in NW Community College when I was teaching up there and this John Hinckley, very knowledgeable and very sophisticated about politics, saw through the John Birch Society's radical, ultraconservative mentality and his vision wasn't clouded by religious truth -- he was able to see that. I got a little exposure from him about an attitude on this thing without picking up at the time a lot of information because I was just too busy doing other things. When I got to BYU Ezra Taft Benson, his son Reed was the coordinator for the John Birch Society, so Ezra Taft Benson was one of the prominent apostles was a very outspoken in support of the John Birch Society and also outspoken in being very critical of Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States who he'd been the Secretary of Agriculture for. And that bothered me. I'd know Ezra Taft Benson personally in the sense of when I was in Washington DC in the Navy I was teaching a Sunday school class and I had his daughter in my Sunday School class, you see and he was in the ward so we ;used to get to see him so there was that limited contact. Ezra and Florence -- you felt that you know them personally, so ... it was considered to be a great privilege. He was one of the great authorities and in the government and to have him being that kind of image for me and the n all of a sudden he's being so critical of Dwight D. Eisenhower. To have him challenge Eisenhower's patriotism...

MJ: And apple pie and mother and everything else.

MS: So that was hard for me to deal with, see, so I made a study of for one of my classes on Ezra Taft Benson and his attitude towards government and Eisenhower and the church's role in government...something like that, from the time he was made an apostle in 1943 until 1960. I took his conference addresses, church publications???and the relief society magazines and Sunday school instructor and so on. And I realized that the guy was going like this. Wandering around from one position to another, back and forth. There was no consistent position that reflected by it. Then I got to studying the literature of the John Birch Soc. and I'd read the Benson and I discovered that he was quoting out the Bleu Book and the Black Book and

the White Book of the J. B. Society. I was into history enough that I knew that Robert Welch was using Oswald Spangler's idea of collectivism is the cancer of political institutions in political society and the more collective the behavior rather than individual the more it moves in that direction and therefore a liberal is a socialist is a communist because communal control is the cancer. I said to myself, it's easy to see where Benson gets his ideas. That's not inspiration, you see, that was the kind of what I was putting together. At the same time I took a class in 20th Century American history. It was just an upper level class from Van Perkins who was just finishing up his Ph.D. from Harvard. I remember him talking about the Sacco-Vanzetti case and all of a sudden history opened up. All of my study of history before I had a filter on. It was like my eyes were on but I put my hands above and formed a grid, you know, a grid you could stand on. And when I'd hear something I'd run it through that grid and I would accept in accord with how I viewed reality from references and absolutes of Mormonism. I remember taking T>A> Larson in his western history class -- he was quoting about polygamy and so forth and I went up to him afterwards, because he was quoting from Jacob, the younger brother of Nephi, and he was saying that the polygamy, multitude of wives was an abomination in his sight. It was his subtle way of saying, see the Mormons are inconsistent in what the book says and what they teach. I went up and pointed out to him, that if he'd read Jacob II or whatever, he's see, but if I will sayeth the Lord, raise up a seed unto me, I will command. Otherwise, you should practice monogamy. Oh, he said, I was unaware of that. So the next day in class he said, one of my students had the courtesy to point out to me...and I want to correct that. So, but see, everything had an absolute answer for me. But all of a sudden I began to realize that there was a force driving this world that could be identified as an historical force apart from God. Why did it happen? Because God created it for this purpose toward this end. See, that was the perspective I had about. So what is the force of history? So in this class I Remember Van Perkins talking about these radicals, Sacco-Vanzetti's concepts and the reaction to it and saying, Huh, people were doing that because they saw that this, in their mind, this is what's causing it to happen, so that's why they should be doing it this way. And people were saying no, this is what causes it and that's why they were doing it. And I began to see that this concept of this is what causes it to happen is the force of history. And I mean, it opened up the history book for the first time. Before that I'd been teaching history like signposts. Well, there's a little argument about out where it started, in the Garden of Eden, you know. But basically, this is where God set it up, the important things are moving towards this because

the Mormons have the solution of the Gospels for those who lived here in mortality by having temple work for the dead. Eventually in the millennium, this will be all taken care of. The Mormons with that fell swoop of temple work for the dead, they could take care of everybody who hadn't been covered.

MJ: History was then, for Mormons, a path to a certain point.

MS: God had set it up. That's right, exactly. And the force behind it, see, was God. It was like he was pushing history along. The idea that somebody along the way could change history, and I remember, I've been teaching these seminar and institute classes so I was really into that, and I remember debating in the summer of '62 whether or not to go into seminar and institute rather than staying into history. I remember studying a class on problems in European History. And this DeLemar Jensen, in five weeks he gave us, we had ten of those Heath things, five or more opinions, 120 pages in them, and so we would have to read these things and have 25 different reasons for the economic cause of the French Revolution. I remember walking home from that and saying, this, this, this, this,....why study history. I like to teach seminary and institute. But somehow, I couldn't let go of it. I don't know why I couldn't let go of my study of history. The other option was open to me, because my work in teaching would have let me in. But I stayed with it but anyway when this opened up for me, I realized there was a whole new world for me. I then made a study of the Mormon church in the election of 1936. And this was important because of the New Deal, the anti-Roosevelt stuff and the whole ball of wax. The church had come out with a news editorial opposing Roosevelt, the socialism and the whole thing, you see. I realized the church leaders had biases just as evident and political as anybody else. That's where it was and they changed their position. With this, I really began to start disconnecting. Interestingly enough, you see, I went to BYU because it was safe. I was reading in the Book of Mormon every day, praying, paying my tithe. I was paying full tithe all the time through here. Borrowing money to go to school. I owed a little over \$10,000, plus I borrowed a little money my last year at the University of Wyoming on the Master's Program, so I owed about \$11,000, 12,000 when I got out of my ABD at BYU.

MJ: And you were still tithing?

MS: And I had Kyle was born in July, '65 so when I left BYU and

accepted the job at Dixie College, I had nine kids and \$10,000 in debt and didn't own a home and I went down there -- I think my salary was about \$7600. I think about a year after I went down there I had to start paying my loan at UW, and about another year I had to start paying back at BYU. I tell you, talk about it being tight, and of course teaching at Dixie college I was chairman of the dept. , they had four depts. I was hired in as chairman of the dept. of social science and education. No. Division they called it then. After two years they changed it to departments. They had 8 or 9 like that and I said to myself, this is a demotion for me because a department of 1/4 of it is not the same as 1/9th, you see. Probably made more sense, but at the time...So at the time I decided not to keep the department head, because it only paid \$200 a year or something like that.

MJ: Where was Dixie College?

MS: St. George, Utah.

MJ: Oh, OK.

MS: Farron Celoh???, see was the President and the reason I got the job offer, I heard about it because I was teaching the High Priests, I was a high priest group leader in the third ward in Provo, see, and his parents, I home taught them. His father, Warren Olse??? was in my Sunday school class, or my high priest class you see, and they came and taught me, so they thought I was just all right, so they recommended me to their son, so I got the job. I interviewed with him and the academic dean and got the job. I went down, moved down, bought a home, used my GI bill to borrow the money, I had \$15,000 eligible and bought a \$13,000, borrowed all the money, down payment, closing costs and everything to cover that.

MJ: Did you feel, Mel, that unlike NW Community College, that this time you were really prepared, or did you again have that feeling, that I'm not doing enough here. No, I felt I was prepared to teach, Yeah. I felt I was prepared to teach this because I'd caught the vision of history so Yeah, I felt good about it. But I had the pressure of finishing up my dissertation and I'm one of those people that's so involve, workaholic type of thing, that rather than just saying this is enough, in terms of preparation, this is enough in terms of serving the faculty and the institution, and the rest goes to my family, goes to my dissertation, I would get totally involved, you se, in doing it. The first year, I'm the chairman of the faculty salary committee,

I'm elected Pres. of the faculty assoc., so the second year I'm president of the faculty assoc. because the pres. elect that was supposed to take over the presidency left, and so I was president elect so I went in and took over and I got into the struggle with the admin. on fairness of salaries for the faculty and we drew up a salary schedule and I also got into the politics of what was going on and I was incredibly naive -- I simply believed that people just told the truth and so here I am running to take care of other people, faculty members problems, with the administration. And the administration...there was some questions about the administrations handling of money - the funds, whether or not they were spending money privately, using work study students on their own projects, which they were...and so naive me, I hear about this and I go to the President to talk with him about this, what are you supposed to do, you don't go behind his back, you go directly, and this president back to the association, so and he would give me an explanation on it, and I'd be inclined to buy it so..Anyway, they had an audit down there and it became obvious that there were some problems. I just couldn't let go of denying that the quality of education and what was going on did not meet what I thought could be done with the caliber of people we had and so on. And I mean I am a good administrator and have always gone into places of leadership, President of the deacons corps, president of the teacher's corps and priesthood classes, student body president in high school, it was just the story of my life. I've always been an administrator in my life -- taking charge, which is a way of controlling the environment you're in so there was that payoff for me on it. But out of my controversy, at the end of my third year when I should have been given tenure, I was denied tenure on the basis that I was having a negative impact on faculty morale and wasn't supporting the college.

MJ: But you were still a good Mormon. And this was a Mormon college.

MS: Oh Yeah, no question of that but what it was was the academic dean primarily was feeling threatened by my performance. Then members of the John Birch Society, the John Birch Society on campus, that was a liberal position anyway

MJ: There was reason to suspect your orthodoxy I guess.

MS: Well it's easy for people who need a justification to come up with one and ♦ that's what they used. But anyway at the end of the fourth year, at the end of

February, they didn't give me a contract, so I was in effect fired from my job at Dixie College. When they elected the personnel committee consisted of the academic dean and the applied arts dean, the president of the faculty assoc. and the president elect of the faculty assoc., and a member at large and so when they elected the member at large in 1969 it was Melvin Smith. Oh, we can't allow you to vote for your own tenure. The year before Howard Putnam, Bill Stragen and Dale Peterson, three of the five members were all on that personnel committee and voted for their own tenure. They somehow got a rumor about some difficulties that occurred at NW Community College -- Bob Weaver was chairman of the democrats up in Wyoming and he had to go around with them up there so they got a rumor started that I was fired from my last job and nearly destroyed the college and so the two men who had voted for me the year before, the two faculty representatives who had voted for my tenure the year before, there were no new charges brought against me, they changed their votes and voted against in that personnel committee, and there was one gal who voted for me and she was the one elected in my place and then the two other people, the faculty and the two deans voted against my tenure so I was denied tenure.

MJ: So this was a set-up job.

MS: Yeah, oh yeah, so I took them to court and eventually won my case.

MJ: What did you take them to court on?

MS: On discrimination against my civil rights. So but anyway that's a whole story by itself that's well documented.

MJ: So, you took them to court...

MS: Yeah, in the federal district, Judge Willis Ritter was the one who tried and Bryce Rule from Salt and Lake representing the ACLU came in and UEA came down and conducted a survey of what was going on and recommended that I be given a promotion and tenure.

MJ: UEA?

MS: Utah Education Association. And the board sent down its own team to investigate it. The board was the state board of education. Therrel H. Bell, Ted Bell who is ...became US Commissioner of Education, and the

Secretary of the HEW was a state superintendent of public instruction at the time and the only thing I regret is that I didn't name him specifically in my lawsuit because he had gotten together with the President and the report of the committee for the board was so negative toward the administration that they simply rewrote it and it was still negative. So I had all that ammunition when I went into court and I won my case from Ritter and they appealed it in the 10th Circuit Court in Denver, and it was a split decision on that and we went again, and then got more help from the National Education Assoc. and we won it then. I got specific damages and punitive damages from the Academic Dean, but didn't get general damages. I mean didn't bring in what impact it had on my family etc. I figured I'd better take my losses and go with that. Then my kids got into drugs -- I was gone to Salt Lake while my family was down in the St. George area and that whole thing. It was a real struggle. That experience in terms of how did I get from the orthodoxy of Mormon Cowley Wyoming to the reality that I live in now. And the dream I had about the good people winning and if you do what's right and the people in authority are there because God wants them there you see, all of that was challenged right to the core. Not only that, but here were faculty members who knew what was going on, who liked and supported me, but when they were under threat would cut my throat, and did. Of course, I find myself still saying, well if I had explained more to Howard Putnam, or if I had done such and such, and if I did stand up and I was kind of abrasive. You see what I mean, I could take my blame on myself. Of course the pattern of a child when you come out of an abusive situation.

MJ: If something goes wrong, there's something wrong with you.

MS: That's right. Powerful position, and when a child is so weak, a big person beating up on the little person, the little person has to have some way of controlling that, and if that's happening, maybe if I'm being bad, then there's some way of stopping it. That's control. A dream of control -- one that has nothing to do with that. The adult is probably beating up on the kid because the adult feels like there's something wrong with him or her and so they're trying to be a good parent but they're having these feelings, and if you have a bad kid it explains why you're having these feelings. One way to make the kid bad is to beat up on him, because you don't beat up on good kids, you beat up on bad kids.

MJ: Did this same mindset then get applied to your kids?

MS: Oh yes, you see, I acted out with my children. Very rigid formula for doing things. Straight is the gait, narrow is the way that leadeth into life. If there's any in Zion who have children and don't teach them the way they should go, sins be on the head of the parents. See, so that not only the pattern and the role model, and the family orthodoxy but the religious orthodoxy supported this type of thing and I did the same thing and I was abusive with my children, not as extensive, with my youngest children. My oldest child, a son, a middle child is a son with three girls in between, and my youngest child is a son. And my raising of my youngest child, my son Kyle was totally different than Heman and Dirk. Just going with the boys.

MJ: Cause you finally woke up to what was happening?

MS: Yes, well it wasn't waking up in the sense of seeing the whole picture like I feel I can now, but it was just saying, in other words I took more responsibility personally by saying I'm not going to turn him over to Marlene. And my way of dealing with my children was to support their mother. Which is what Dad did. And Marlene of course was not capable of where she was, of running the family and being disciplined -- she came out of, her mother was very disciplined and rigid and she took responsibility for Marlene trying to play the adult when in fact she was emotionally feeling and acting out as a child. And so that kind of double message and the issues between Marlene and me really created problems for our children so they began to act out to balance the family. The family, the way I see it now should be a balanced unit, you see. And it should have an equilibrium to it. If the stress is here, it'll adjust and swing back, but if you got persistent stresses and are under duress, particularly in the primaries, the parents, well then the family can't make the adjustment. Alcoholism is a form of chronic stress, well, workaholism, a sense that you're not OK, being codependent, and depending upon your sense of self by how you perform or how others treat you. All of those are issues that I had so Marlene was angry, well, what had I done that wasn't enough, or If she was sad, well, I could have done more. That was how I was dealing with it. Now here are the children acting out, if there wasn't enough love, tenderness, softness, well then somebody acts out. It happened in my own family and it happened with my children.

MJ: Now, that's really one of the things that we wanted to get down. Now after you got fired from Dixie College and won your court case, meanwhile you've got to make a living so then what?

MS: When they didn't give me a job, I was interviewing. What I said to myself was, rather than fighting this through with the administration, why don't I just go get me a different job. So I'd interviewed, I'd put out applications at about 70- different places. there were lots of jobs available.

MJ: In Utah?

MS: No, all over. Mainly out of state. I was offered a job in three different places, Thatcher, AZ, at Casa Grande they were just putting in a new college down there just between Phoenix and Tucson and they offered me a job as a division head down there. It would have been a real good job. And I'd like to have gotten there in AZ and I accepted it. In the meantime, after they'd offered me the job they'd had a national meeting of junior college presidents and the brouhaha over my firing, see I'd reacted and it had got into the..the students got ahold of it and it got into the papers and the whole thing so what could the president say when they asked. He wasn't blackballing me, he was just answering question, the question, yeah. And so the job that was offered was withdrawn from me. Then I went to Gilroy CA to Foothill College. They needed somebody who could teach English, Latin American History, World Geography and maybe world history. I mean, to find somebody -- I had a geography minor, I had Spanish and a good Latin American background in that and I mean, it fit like a glove and I was very honest with them about what happened, I had the UEA's report and let them read it and so forth and they wouldn't go with me, so I couldn't get a job at any of those colleges. Juanita Brooks, who lived in St. George and the Mountain. Meadows massacre, and is the expert on that and wrote a book on the Mountain. Meadows Massacre, so on, I had gotten well acquainted with her and she was on the board of history at the Utah state historical society. And they just started the historic preservation program, they had \$13,000 to spend. That was their allocation. \

MJ: This was in '66?

MS: This was in '69.

MJ: Oh, you got started a couple years later than we did.

MS: So anyway, she talked to Chas Peterson and Charles Peterson who was the director of the state historical society called me up and asked me if I was interested and I said absolutely and I went up and interviewed and got

the job. I started at \$11,000.

MJ: With \$2,000 extra for travel and...

MS: Well, in the program yeah. But I mean the money went into the budget, so I was paid out of the composite budget, so they gave some slack there. So, anyway, I take the job and I leave my family down there, Marlene and the 9 kids...

MJ: Down in?

MS: In Washington, Utah, which is out of St. George. and I move up and I'm living in an apartment my sister has in downtown Salt Lake City, where she does wig work for people and that was a good place for them to come in, so I have a back porch and live free. Well, here I was without a job in the summer of 1969. I have nine children, the oldest was not quite 16 and I can't get a job and I'm \$10,000 in debt. The equity I've got in my house might be \$2,000. I'll tell you, those were days of stress, but it was to examine why, what was going on and dealing with people in that situation at Dixie college. I had discovered...I had learned about administration. I said, hey, people want to do a good job. People will work for you if you just give them responsibility and give them credit. I took this job as preservation officer in 1969 and then two years later Chas left and went to Logan to Utah State University. and I was appointed director in August 1971

MJ; Director of what?

MS: Director of the Utah Historical Society and so administratively I pulled it together really quickly. The morale of the whole thing, I mean I could handle. The experience I had and Dixie college really served me well. It was an education that way and so I just started hiring the best people I could and the program began to grow. I took advantage of it more than being the cause of it, but we went from a staff of about 13 to eventually we had over 100. We ended up finally when I left in 1985 we had a staff of about 40./ We went from a budget of \$120 000 to about a budget of 2 million dollars. Over that 15 year period that I was director. Those were circumstances that I capitalized on.

MJ: Did you enjoy that work?

MS: Yes, there were a lot of things about it that I enjoyed, but I really missed was teaching. What I ended up being was a teacher. I taught Kent, and Phil and put them in charge of their program and taught them how to administer.

MJ: Kent Powell and Phil Notorianni. and Jay Hamand who was head of the Library program and David Matson who was the head of the state archeology program which was a new program that we got. And you know, just I set it up so it was almost classroom administration in a sense that we would meet once a week to have an administrators meeting and if people had issues they brought them in so everybody knew what everybody else was and somebody come to me with a complain about somebody over here and I'd say how serious is that -- they'd say pretty serious, and I'd ask serious enough for you bring it up in a staff meeting. Not that serious, all right then, I'd say I don't want to hear anymore about it. But if it's serious enough then lets bring it up and work it through. And once they found how that worked, the issue came through so communication opened up and people knew what was going on because you heard the other guy reporting what was going on and so they'd say hey, that's having an impact on me and it was a really effective way of administering. We really got along well and I put those people in charge of the program, really top professional people, they were the professionals doing the work as well as administering the program itself. What I was providing was the political insulation and the finances through my handling as the director so they didn't have to deal with the politicians directly, but as professionals they had money and they had the opportunity and responsibility. Those guys ran a good program and they were competitive wherever they went in their professional field. Jay in the archives and the library...

MJ: Were you still caught up in this syndrome in every other situation -- you felt it was necessary to do a good job in order to be validated?

MS: Oh yes, with the election of 1980, they elected a whole bunch of conservatives to the legislature there in Utah. Real conservative Republicans, you know, with the Reagan landslide. We had a guy in there by the name of Mac Haddow. And Mac Haddow was you know, he was an aide to Warren Hatch, Sen. Warren Hatch. Haddow made the boast, one time I heard him say at our budget hearing for our department and division of state history. He said I was elected for the purpose of getting rid of the state archeologists. And what happened is some archeologists had come, we

were doing some of the surveys rather than the private sector. The private sector was just gearing up to do it, but they weren't big enough and there was that tension about who should get the contract see, on it, because they were trying to survive economically and sometimes being a little slothful in their standards see, and so anyway we got caught up in that stress and what we did was back out as the private sector could take over see. But anyway we got cut back from a regular staff of about 60, and they cut our budget and they cut the federal budget as you know and historic preservation too, so we dropped from about 60 to 35 people and still were asked to provide the same kind of services so that was very stressful. I remember coming a budget hearing and it looked like I might have to cut some people off the staff and saying to myself, Dammit, and I really admired Governor Strom Addis????, a Democrat and I knew him personally and felt he was supporting our program and approved, he'd moved into the Curn's???Mansion where the historical society was housed but he supported us getting into this Denver Rio Grande Railroad Depot and I remember driving along and saying, dammit, why doesn't he stand up -- here was this Mac Howadol??? say, you know Melvin you are the biggest crook in state government and I'm just ready to come off and strangle the son of a bitch, you know, big fat guy, and he was baiting me of course you know, but he was just a real bastard in my opinion to speak frankly about the situation, but I remember trying to deal with that and saying to myself what am I doing--what's wrong, why isn't the governor helping me. I remember my mind just taking hold and saying the governor is a politician and the reason he's a governor is that he is a politician and a politician has a legitimate role in society to pull the factions together in a form of management and he has to stay within that reference because people have asked you why you didn't go into politics -- the president of Dixie College asked, Melvin why don't you go into politics. And I said I didn't go into politics because I wanted to be Melvin and I knew I couldn't be Melvin and play the role, so now what am I complain about, the governor doing for me. And I said, hey, and I got insight about the role of politicians that didn't have to do with morally right and wrong so much as it had to do with you've got to do...

MJ: Practicality...

MS: Practicality, and so what I did then, I said, Hey, and so the arrangement I had with my department head and the governor, we'd provide them with the professional data they wanted and we would support their political position but we would not validate the rightness or wrongness of

their political positions, but what they decided, we would support and we would act out .

MJ: I remember you talking about that one time, about how -- and you made an argument about this in a state historic office preservation office meeting, or at least maybe it was informally, about how, and you were very strong on that point, that these decisions are up to other people. All we do is provide information.

MS: Yes, and that was a philosophy that emerged and I developed.

MJ: Now you said, you talked about Bangerder???

MS: Yes, when we came in Norman Bangerder came in and I was a visible Democrat and they were trying to, the Democrats held the Governor's office for twelve years in Utah, so they were anxious to replace as many people as they could. But anyway, I used this same approach in providing information and we were not told directly, but the implication which was clear to us was that the governor will make the decisions and you will validate professionally that that political decision is the right decision professionally. And I just told them I couldn't do it. They asked me about letting AMTRAC come into the Denver Rio Grande Railroad Depot and wouldn't this be good for the historical society. I said absolutely not, and I gave them my reasons for my decision. I said if you make the decision, then we'll live with that and we won't try to make any public embarrassment or anything, but here's your information. And So, anyway, that was difficult thing to kind of deal with and eventually it led to my being fired as director of the state historical society. Here I had a period from 1965 to 1985, 20 years of my professional life and I was fired from both of my jobs.

MJ: That speaks well of you. It tells me that you have won your battle so far at least to be Mel.

MS: Yeah, that was real and I thought that I was moving enough to accommodate the Bangerder administration.

MJ: You were also in that program. You just unselfishly talked about your role in the state history preservation program. You were also an educator, a teacher, maybe even a moralist in the national program. You worked your way up through the ranks. Did that happen right away?

MS: Yes, that was very typical of me. I would immediately go into the .. and I think, you know I'm a man of ability and administrative skills. I understand that, and I understand how to do it. I project a tone of authority and confidence and so on., I'm aware of that happening. What I've been able to discover also is I could have more control in a leadership position. It was a more comfortable environment -- I could control the environment I lived in more when I was in charge and I had -- if somebody said to me, Melvin this is a significant part of your motivation, I'd probably have denied it. I'd have said, no I'm just trying to do a good job. You know if good comes in, that's a moral value and there's a good way to do it, and you need control to have it good, so that is control.

MJ: Ultimately if you were doing a good job and you were validated and you had to continue that role.

MS: Yes, that's how I got doing, I was a human doing, more than a human being. Was your anticipating, how did this change come about in me? There's something I want to get down on tape and that is probably the single most profound experience in terms of something a pattern of behavior in my life, the most significant thing, is when I took up jogging. And jogging has had the single, biggest impact on my life of anything.

MJ: That's the first time I've ever heard anybody say that. I've always believed that about myself, but go ahead.

MS: Anyway, I started walking from Washington, Utah. I had a little motorbike that I was riding, an 80cc Yamaha, and in the winter time it was getting a little chilly with no windshield. For one reason or another, my health, my back was bothering a little bit and struggling with weight, I wasn't heavy, under 180 pounds, and had been up to 185, and I just got the urge to walk that 4.3 mile from my front door to my desk on the campus and so I did it. And pretty soon I found myself walking each, before I'd had Marlene come in and get me or get a ride with somebody or something like that. And out of that than I read Ken Cooper's book about Aerobics and I got the concept of conditioning that it didn't have to be eight minute and forty seconds and eight minutes and thirty-nine seconds and a little improvement each day. The conditioning if you raised the heart rate that conditioning would occur over time and you could do so much each day and you would build up conditioning. And once I got that concept it just

connected for me. What it did for me, was it was legitimate time for myself you see, to just rest or take time for myself, you should be doing something you see. But jogging was doing something, but it was also quieting the mind down so I could think and get release of stress. I started in April of 1968 so I've been jobbing now for over 20 years regularly and consistently. But I can remember coming out of those faculty meetings after school at Dixie College and being so uptight with the lies and the hypocrisy that I was hearing going on from the administrators and the frustration and not being about to make it work. I started running home. I started running a little bit while I was walking home, I remember jogging home through St. George through those Black Hills and maybe getting out about 2-2.5 miles and feeling my system just letting go -- just relax and then I finally got going long distances and going out and jogging 6 or 7 miles and taking a deep breath and saying, I'm really going. A runner's high. And what I found occurring for me is that I was letting the mind distress and relax. I got into transcendental meditation - I took a course in transcendental meditation in 1973 also that with the combination of this type of thing that I'd find myself running and rather than consciously thinking through a problem, an issue at work or the family and all of a sudden an answer would just snap into my head, just like that (snap of finger). Where before answers came I could give you the genealogy of how I got the answer -- I thought this, then I thought that, then I thought this, then I thought that...and over here and here's the answer. Then all of a sudden, there's the answer. I knew that what I wanted to do, then I could put back the structure of why I'd get there, but it didn't come through the structuring. I call it the genealogy, was not there. But it was a whole new way of thinking. Where in the past, somebody would say, what do you think about this. I'd say, I think this and they'd say and I could give them the genealogy of where I was 20 years ago, and how I got to there and to there and to there. This point, that point, and finally to this point. I knew how I'd got there cause it was all in my mind see. Rather than letting the subconscious, you see, it's having that free access. This was an incredible experience. The other dimension of jogging for me is that there was a measurement. I went out against myself every day. I said to myself, how come I feel weak and tired. And let's see, I ran harder, no I didn't. Then I got into thinking how I was eating. I got into attitudes and I got into how well I'd slept and my vitamin intake. There was something to measure against and ask questions. It wasn't a right or wrong measurement, it was experiential measurement. Out of that was just an incredible experience for me.

MJ; It helped your growth obviously. It had a big part to play in where you are now.

MS> It was that where I began to listen to myself, you know and trust it. I can remember it -- you and I jogged enough together. The conversation, the free exchange of ideas flowing when you're . . . When I was working on my Ph.D., I lived about a mile and a half north of the BYU campus. Little over a mile, depending where you went on campus. Learning my French, I would walk that so Marlene could have the car you see. I would walk it and that was before I was into any kind of exercise program but I'd walk it and I'd read my French book and memorize my vocabulary and other things and it was interesting when I took the examination for my French exams I could remember exactly where I was on the trail when I put that word into my mind. And I said to myself, I wonder if there is some connection, and as we take people on historic tours with the historical society, the excitement of people about traveling, I wonder if there's not some connection. I don't know if it's the movement, or being on the site, or in other words is learning, does learning have a geographic base too? You know, see, I find myself asking that question because of the experience I've had.

MJ: Part of it, I think, is visual because I know, I don't know if you can do this, but when I'm reading a book and I come across a particular idea, I sort of remember what page it was on, whether it was right or left page, whether it was closer to the top of the page or the bottom. I'm not so good that I can give you a line, but I can probably, especially if it's fresh in my mind and I haven't read this book three years ago, I can pick out of the last pages that I've read recently, just about where that idea will appear. I don't know what it is, but I know what you mean about walking and associating.

MS: Anyway, that's been a very powerful experience, a health factor. I've got rid of a lot of stress. I've run marathons. It was a valid way, I've been addictive in my behaviors, you know, a workaholic, compulsive and a perfectionist, those kinds of behaviors. Well, here was another addictive behavior in running, but it was positive in a sense that it relieved stress and it was also healthful for me. I don't know what I would have done in terms of the stress in my family and other things, you know, as they were dealing with those issues because....

MJ: Yeah, I hear you talking about jogging. I think in a way though, it allowed you to continue...obviously when you throw off stress and when you

build up stamina you also increase your power to handle a situation. So it will allow you to also, theoretically, to continue in the kind of behavior pattern which you were in, which is control, more control. But the difference is here, is what you told me -- you were measuring your progress against former progress. It was no longer somebody else's expectations. If Mel was going to be good, it was going to have to be a marathoner.

MS: No, there wasn't any of that. I found myself moving into the competitive role naturally, as I wanted to challenge myself because in terms of wanting to be the best I didn't consciously set out that objective. I found that was too stressful for me. So what I did, I just worked hard and pretty soon I had worked hard enough that I was competitive and I was the best in my class often because I had worked that hard. If I had had a good coach and had been goal oriented in the sense of being the best, I know my performances at least in terms of capacity, I didn't max out. You see what I'm saying? But I felt good about what I was doing and what was happening in my life and that was good enough. My jogging performance was good enough. And I mean the dividends of traveling and jogging around communities and getting acquainted with new cities and so forth...

MJ: Enormous.

MS: There was so much satisfaction for me in that, so it's just been a very powerful experience. Now I don't have the same compulsion -- if I miss a day and I gotta go so many miles or anything like that. I run about how I feel. I miss it if I don't do it.

MJ: Sure, I understand that. So where are you now, you're 62 and you're jogging. Are you still pushing it pretty hard?

MS: I don't consider it hard, no. I had a horse buck with me in spring of 1986, just before, early in March. I was breaking a little mare in a field up here just east. And she just kind of kicked up with me, she didn't really buck -- you've seen horses play, and jump up and down. And somehow or other, that jar, split a tendon in my left hip that had been injured back when I was about 17 years. I was riding a big thoroughbred mare up on the Pryor Mtns., Sage Creek. She started to run with me and she was about 6 years old and was just breaking her. She started to run real hard, I was pretty spooked. Then she started to buck going downhill. And then she hit and stressed that tendon, and I had it stressed off and on through the years, usually with a

bucking horse, and just eventually it weakened and got tight and finally it snapped. I could hear it pop, I could just hear it go (pop) like that and I knew what had happened, and anyway the soreness that resulted from that -- I kind of backed off for awhile. Anyway, then I went up to Idaho and I didn't just feel the need. Things were happening in my life I guess. I just feel the need for the same output -- competitive output. I ran my last marathon in the fall of '85 and let's see, I'd have been 57. I set a goal for myself to break three hours and I ran a 2:59. I hit the half marathon -- looking at my watch, it was 1:29. One hour and twenty-nine minutes. I said if I can do a 1:30 or 1:31 I'll still ... when I ran across the line it was exactly 2:59 and so I'd run the second half in 1:30.

MJ: Did you feel that jogging and running gave you extra energy and stamina to carry out things you wanted to carry out in the national and the state program?

MS: I think so.

MJ: I don't think people really realize that that gives you strength to carry on.

MS: I think people who haven't gotten into it -- I remember the first time I became aware of what it meant because I went up against a measurement that I'd been exposed to before. After we moved, I started in '68 and I moved my family to Salt Lake in 1970, and I think it was probably that summer that we went out on a picnic out on the Pony Express trail at Lookout Mountain. We stopped there and we decided to picnic up the slope away. I picked up this big box of ice chest of groceries and it's pretty good weight, not real heavy, but pretty good weight. Well, I'd done that before on picnics, see, and pretty soon after 50 yards you were starting to suck air and your legs and starting to burn a little bit. It didn't happen - neither one of them happened. I said to myself, this is incredible. I mean, I used to be so strong for my weight and everything, much stronger than I was now. I can remember getting off a horse and walking up a hill and pretty soon my legs are burning, and my lungs are burning and but in terms of speed and strength I was a lot stronger then, but now in terms of cardiovascular conditioning... So I mean I could just do it and I found myself being able to. For the 15, 16 1/2 years at the Utah State Historical Society I don't think I took one day of sick leave in that 16 1/2 years, so when I left I lost about 6 months of sick leave.

MJ: Didn't it accumulate?

MS: It accumulated until I left. If I had retired with it they were trying to get it so you could get part of that that you could convert into. . . I mean I converted four days into as much as I could, but you accumulated ♦ 8 days a year, see. So I lost all that, but all I 8 days a year, see. So I lost all that, but all I'm saying is, I just didn't get sick. I haven't had a headache for 20 years and I haven't taken an aspirin in 20 years. I remember taking a cold tablet right after I started jogging, the first year or so. I used to have sinusitis, my nostrils would plug up and my sinuses would plug up just like a toothache (wham, wham, wham in your head). I don't have sinusitis anymore, so it's just been so incredible.

MJ: We need to get into your going from Utah to Idaho, and eventually where you are now, getting out of everything. I'd like you to get into these archetypal descriptions or descriptions of the archetypes of your mind, where you made these breaks and changes. I think that's really going to be interesting.

MS: Let's go through the Idaho, then we'll finish up. After I got notice, I'd been to the meeting, the State History Administrators Meeting in Texas, in Austin in late November, December of '85 and then we went to Arizona for the Historic Preservations Officers the first or second weekend in December. I came back and I usually, gone of the weekend like that, it's usually come in on Sunday afternoon when I'd come back, and just check and have Monday ready with a consciousness of the week. And here's this note, call Dave Adams, who was my department head. I didn't think anything about it. On Monday morning I called Dave Adams -- no response and he was home sick or something like that. I'm sitting there in my office about 4:00 o'clock on Wednesday afternoon and in walks Dave Adams. I says, How you doin'. Fine. Anyway he got right into it -- I need to talk to you. He said, we're thinking about making some changes. I says, Oh, what have you got in mind? I'm still not realizing what was coming. He ways, well, we're planning to change your position. And I said, well, what, why? Well, he says, we just want somebody more in sympathy with where we are and so on. I says, well, what are your grounds for dismissing me? And he said, we don't have to give any cause. And I says, yes you do. Cause when they changed the law, I'd been hired by the board with the approval of the department head. When they changed the law in 1979 it read so you were

hired by the department head with the approval of the board. I had them retain in the law that you could be fired only with cause after consulting the board. Then the department head could fire you. So I says, what's the cause. He said, we had a special session of the Legislature and we changed that law, so we don't have to give cause. He said, I've checked and you've got nearly six weeks of leave accumulated, you see, cause I wasn't using leave, I was compiling that was being converted, half of it, to annual leave and he said, so we'll give you a couple weeks on top of that. I said, that isn't enough. He said, well then, will you resign? And I said, I've got to talk with the board about it. So I called Tom Alexander, professor at BYU who was the chairman at the time. Bill Abrahms was no longer there, so he didn't have that long experience and support that I would have had from him. That was on Wednesday and Tom called a meeting for Friday. Now, I'd had experience at Dixie College, so I knew that the Board was good for a certain amount, but that's all. My interpretation was the Board would simply not go to bad. You had some powerful people there, and it was putting their butts on the line and my own judgment was that when push got to shove, that once you got controversy within the board, then you don't get anything, you see. Not only that, your behavior is such that the public says, hey, they fight the issue in the media, and say look at the way the guy's behaving. The Governor can't work with him -- they should let him go. You become guilty after the fact. Almost like a bill of attainder, you know. And so I just said, well, -- they said, well do you want to retain your job. I said, well, I don't really want to work where I'm not wanted, you know, that environment, again taking the blame and responsibility my self. There was also the judgment that they wouldn't and couldn't do it anyway. So I said, well, I need more time. I knew they'd support that. So anyway, instead of two weeks in December, I got until the first of May with my leave. What they did was pay me up right after the first of the year on it and they didn't have the tax scale so this one month I'm getting two or three months pay in one paycheck, see what I mean, which the tax ends up being the equivalent of about \$9,000 a month as my salary, so you think what the tax was out of that situation. Anyway, I ended up there. I was wondering what to do. I had the opportunity of doing some private research in forests that might open up for me, history of forests, forest preservation.

MJ: Mel, there's something I'm interested in here now. I always thought it was the change of governor's that....

MS: Yes, it was. He came in in '84, you see they fired the Fine Arts

director and there was a real reaction from her board. Ruth Draper???, see, so then they had to change the law before they could follow through with me you see. Because the trustees would have supported me right down the line in '84. Then he had the chance to appoint some new people in April of '85 see.

MJ: OK, so this was not then due to any particular stance you'd taken, it was just due to a new governor, more or less?

MS: Well, I was a visible democrat. I'd supported Wayne Owens against the governor. And I hadn't been publicly visible and I had done it with some money you see. I had opposed AMTRAC coming in, which he wanted, and which Orin Hatch and Jake Gahn, big guns in the Republican party wanted, and I was logical enough and powerful enough that I had gotten the board to discuss the issue and the board supported the historical society staying in there. Where Norm Bangerder wanted me to tell the board that AMTRAK ought to come in see. The AMTRAK issue played a bigger issue in terms of the trigger than I recognized at the time or had really given it credit. Then the gal that this Dave Adams and his assistants, I can't think of her name, clearly I had felt that they incompetent. And the type of people that Norm Bangerder as governor pulled around him, in terms of his assistance and his department head, they were incompetent. I was used to the type of people that Scott Matheson, not that all of his people were good, but there was a totally different situation. So Alice Sheer was the gal who was the assistant in the department that was over me. Then I had a person in the staff that was undermining me, and that was Wilson Martin -- a double dealer and you know, just as dishonest and crooked as a snake in terms of how . . . And he would tell me of things that he was doing and that were discrediting me, and not recognizing that I was getting information from the guy who was doing it and he was claiming it wasn't happening, and just based on that information I could see that he was cutting my throat, with Alice Sheer and so on.

MJ: What department head . . . what kind of department was this? The Utah State Parks?

MS: No, it was the department of community and economic development.

MJ: You had been folded into that?

MS: Right. Right. And so, community department, department of community services and department of economic development were combined into community and economic development.

MJ: And within that was the department of Utah Parks and State History?

MS: No, State History -- State parks were natural resources -- Department of Natural Resources, so that was a separate...

MJ: So you were getting it from above and below?

MJ: Right. Right. And then we had a fellow on the staff, John McCormick, a historian. A good historian, but he was really milking the system right to doing his own private research. He was always late in turning in his performance. And he worked for Jay and he worked for Kent and he was just looking out for John McCormick so I took him on in a sense. Just being honest. It was Jay's issue, but I took it on. That was a calculation that was unwise -- to get personally that directly involved. And John was paranoid about the whole thing so he was dealing behind my back also. There was two people on the staff out of a staff of 40 people, there was two people that could see some crack in the armor, which proved that it was a morale problem at the historical society. And then Dave Mattson married a gal who was working at the historical society, Liz whatever her name was. She was also an archeologist and so she was working in the preservation office, but also in a sense was working for Dave so that was a nepotism issue. Well, what it was, was people just trying to find excuses. So I talked to Dave about the nepotism issue. Dave said, I don't think there was a nepotism issue, even if she was working directly for me. So we went to the law and he got the law and dug it up and read so that if they had gotten their job before and had merit status, then, you know, it wasn't there. And she wasn't being supervised by Dave anyway. And he wasn't evaluating her for promotions or anything. And so I took this information up to the department head and I said, the way I read the law is we do not have a nepotism issue here. I felt the issue before it came up with you. I think we ought to have the department ask for an attorney general's opinion on it. And they didn't want to go that way

MJ: Because that would have validated you.

MS: Right, or however, but they didn't want to run the risk. In other

words, you got the word, didn't you? How come you're giving us trouble? For some reason or another, I felt the quality of the people and the quality of the performance was what my business was all about, and I just didn't cover my ass. What is it, CYS --

MJ: CYA. The old CYA, you bet.

MS: Yeah, so anyway, I end up getting the ax and I heard about the job, I don't know whether Chas Peterson called my up or what, but anyway the job of director of the Idaho State Historical society had opened up all of a sudden.

MJ: Merle Wells was up there.

MS: Yeah, Merle Wells and Arthur Hart was the director. Merle was the state historical preservation officer and so I applied for the job and I went up and interviewed on it, I remember going up there and I'd gone out jogging along the Boyshe?? River along the motel I was staying. Gail and I, my wife, had gone up and I came back and I said to her, Gail, I found myself saying, "What in the hell am I doing here?" You know, going back into what I had come out of and I'd established myself nationally as a competent director of state history, state historic preservation officer, in other words, Utah's program was respected nationally.

MJ: Yeah, and a leader in the national program.

MS: Yeah, in the program, see, so I said, why am I doing this? For status, for reputation -- what more can I do than I have done, and when push got to shove, I got kicked out on my ass, so competence had nothing to do with it. And not only that, the history community itself, now, within the staff, I probably sheltered the staff too much, my hurt was too immediate, but I sheltered the staff, rather than within their own comfort zone, be visible, like going away party, I said, no I don't want one. I feel that was a judgment call I wish I'd made it the other way and let them do for me, see, you know what I mean. But no, not Melvin. That was a show, it really would have been a show of affection for me, because, dammit, somebody should have done something. They all should have resigned or -- you know what I mean. You see, that was the hurt speaking and but then the history community at large, which I had done so much for I felt, in Utah; I was the president of the Assoc. of Utah Historians, the first president of that, and helped to organize

it. And, you know, president of the Mormon history association for a year, and you know, I'd supported the college departments in getting money for the preservation ends of their --supported and written letters of recommendation. I mean, I had really supported Utah history. And I had gone to battle for these people from my powerful position as the director of the state historical society. And those people when they came through on it, they just wouldn't come through. And the Utah state association of history went up to talk to the governor and I remember them coming into the office and talking to me about what they were going to do. I said to Chas, Chas, I want you to know I appreciate the fact that you guys are doing this and the gesture. But it's not going to make a bit of difference. When dealing with politicians, it isn't what you do privately in their office. It's got to be public and unless you people are willing to do that, it's not going to make any difference. Well, anyway, when I interviewed on the job at Idaho, I said, I'm really embarrassed a little bit by what's happened here, because there's a vice president's job at Snow College at Ephraim has opened up and I said it's teaching and education and I've got the qualifications and the background and the interest and it's 14 miles from farm, where I'm living, professionally it's an opportunity I feel I have to look at, I just feel like I've got to..and here I've applied for this job.

KENT POWELL ARRIVES

Anyway, we better end this.

BREAK

In a sense, that takes care of my mission.

MJ: That's right, that's right, in a sense. Since you don't know what God put you here on this earth for, just being.

MS: Right, yeah. Trying to make that connection and

MJ: Well, when you come close to death, you understand that the most precious thing is being.

MS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MJ: Just being alive is...

MS: For me it was just being OK, just to be. I didn't have to answer. The stress of life comes because, for me anyway, you're supposed to be a certain way, or doing a certain thing, or becoming something. Or there's a right, there's a truth, there's a good or somewhere you're supposed to be headed. To be happy, to be good, to be useful, to be worthwhile, to find your purpose in life. You see?

MJ: You get caught up in that stuff...

MS: I look at the incredible production of my life, you know...

MJ: You've worked for about two men, at least.

MS: And say to myself, Now what the hell good did my production do? Many of the problems that I needed production to solve were created by the fact that I was living a dysfunctional lifestyle, and you see now, for me to spend a half hour, or an hour or two or three or four with my children. We can sit down now and talk for hours.

MJ: That's great.

MS: And I learn so much from them. Which is, you know...and I feel their love. I mean it's just incredible. Children love their parents if given half a chance. You know, I hear you talk about your father and the love I've heard you talk about extending to him -- reaching out to him.

MJ: There's some unresolved things there, but I'm very quickly resolving them in my own mind because I've got to go on with life and I think there's some insurmountable things there, but part of our problem was that there was actually a physical reason. He was having an operation and was very uncomfortable about it and then got some infections, bacterial or viral or both infections in his eye that was operated on. He was in a terrible mood, and we got into some terrible fights and said some things that we shouldn't have said, and I felt self-righteous enough to think that I'm getting some things out of him that I needed to get out of him for a long time, and maybe he can find out where I stand. I've kind of changed my mind about that too, because I'm not really sure that that's really what it's all about. He's just him, and I've just got to learn to accept him. When you've got this father son relationship just like you have father-kid relationships and you have

probably just begun to resolve the father kin relationship...

MJ: Shall we open this up and get some of the fresh night air?

MS: I'm half asleep here I think.

MJ: But yeah, so we maybe didn't resolve anything. But I'll tell you what I did do. I think a little something always comes out of something. Something that you can pick up on and I think I picked up from him through our arguments that I...See a long time ago, my sisters used to tell me that he was a fascist. They'd say, C'mon, he's a fascist, what do you expect. And I'd defend him -- I'd defend the man. I'd say, no, no he's not a fascist. That's pretty radical. He's got his biases, he's a little old fashioned and he's got his prejudices. He's not a fascist. He's got a lot of good qualities that you're overlooking. Come to find out, they were right. He's about as far right as you can get and still be alive. And so everyone of his kids that I can think of, maybe with the exception of one, about everyone of his kids has rebelled against him and rejected that ultra-right conservative attitude that's just embodied in his marrow like a piece of granite or something. He's just conservative and everyone of his kids rebelled against it, thank goodness. I don't know where we'd be - far right Birch conservatives. Well, anyway...I'm not here to talk about me.

MS: This is great.

MJ: We were talking about what, Idaho?? Where were we at?

MS: I was just in the interview up there...

MJ: But the one thing we hadn't talked about, and that you've told me about in the past, was that you weren't sure why you went up there.

MS: I'll talk about that. In the interview I told the trustees that I was somewhat embarrassed because a job had opened at Snow College and I knew that I could handle that job, and I wanted the opportunity to apply for that job. And I felt that -- I mean my application to them had been in good faith, but I couldn't give them a yes or no answer from the interview. So they said, well, let's go ahead with the interview and to come back in a couple of hours and they'd have an answer for me. I really expected them to say, Well, take their offer or not. When I got back, they had increased their

offer by \$1000 and told me they'd give time to when they closed the applications at Snow College to make the decision on it. They didn't give me a time to process the whole thing through, and I thought that was very generous of them. I found myself saying, why am I up here, and since I've quit the job in Idaho -- I was there a year. Then I realized that I went to Idaho because of my belief system. It was safe because it was the sensible thing, I could defend it rationally on the basis, here I knew the job. It was a respectable job, it paid well, it had security, hospitalization, retirement benefits, I could go for five years and retire with some vested interest in retirement or I could go 7 years till I was 65, -- it was all the right reasons. After I was there six months, I said, I don't want to do this anymore. It was an excellent job! They treated me well, I didn't have the political pressures that I'd had here in Utah,

MJ: By the way, talk about expectations, I myself would have thought that was a great, and I thought at the time, that was a great move for you. Here you have been, I think everybody in the program knew that you'd been kicked out because of a new governor, and to hear Merle Wells was retiring I guess and to hear that you were taking over as SHPO, State Historic Preservation Officer, up there and I myself, just felt that it was a very logical step. So, talk about expectations.

MS: But because the treatment from the trustees, I said to the chairman of the board, I need to get some guidelines from you people as to what I'm supposed to be doing here. And he said, The reason we hired you is because we figured you knew more about it than we do. And I said OK so I mean I was very comfortable about what I had to do and what I needed to do and I set it up and within six months I had administrative changes going and by nine months I had program plans worked up and worked out and the reaction of the trustees was -- they were really excited about it, and one of them said to me, Oh, this is what we're doing. It was starting to come together with enough system that they could see. Then, of course, I was getting support from then, not just in the fact that they hired me, but in the management and development of the programs and supporting a staff of people that I'd assigned to each of these responsibilities. And the thing just really moved along. I felt really good about it. At the end of nine months I made the decision that I was going to quit and go back to my farm. And the rationale that I used was I was not happy, but professionally I can't go any further than I did in Utah, so what do I achieve by simply doing more than the same. And I felt like I didn't belong anywhere and I felt like I was 65 years old. In

other words, I couldn't really live until I got done what I had to do at the job. I said to myself, I'm not going to give up...

END TAPE 2

July 15, Continuation, tape 3, Mel Smith, Job in Idaho

and so I said to myself, I don't want to give up 5, 6 or 7 years. So I thought about running across the Oregon Trail as my personal venture..

MJ: Oh, really?

MS: In other words, I can go out and I could run---I could go out and say to myself, I could run 20 miles on a Saturday or 25. And then, or go out 10 miles and back 10 miles, then the next week-end, I'd go out where I left off and go ten, see and that way, by the time I'd finished up, I'd have run the trail both ways. All of it.

MJ: And you'd know it pretty well.

MS: Yeah, and I thought -- in other words, I'd have some reason for being there. And I said to myself, why do I do that? Why do I just make up something to do, because I'd lost my enthusiasm for that facet of history, administrative. and I found myself with some disillusionment with the message, with what history had to say. I realized how woefully incomplete any kind of record was, both in terms of the report, the material available to record but also the materials even when there was a wealth of information, only reported what was perceived at a certain level and didn't get inside people many times. Of what was really going on. I knew about my own...the complexity of the motivation within my own life and I could see that in other people and I just said, the story is incomplete so what was history really?

MJ: In other words you felt that maybe academic historians were far off the mark? Just because of the sources that were available to them and the kind of training they had.

MS: It wasn't a matter of being, necessarily challenging that for me, because I felt that I had gotten a lot of good things out of history. My study of history, my perspective and so forth but in terms of answers about reality, which has always been a motivation in my life, I mean, what is it about. For some reason that was a question I had all the time. Part of it I guess is the

Mormon background which presumed those answers that God was running the show, and this was what was going on. And I found that the basis for that conviction and the arguments that worked for me at one time in my life no longer worked you know, a religious argument, so I had changed it. I thought history, I found in history these insights and I began to see the limited amount of information that was available. And one of those insights came by reading of Fawn Brody's "No Man Knows My History" which is a biography of Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet. And I read that book three times, once in 1950 or before just before I went on my mission in 1948. And then about ten years later and again another 10-15 years after that. And each time I read that book, it was a different book, to me. And it was not because I was not intelligent all the time, or that I didn't read it intently, you see, and honestly, but my reference about reality, my biases had changed so that that book became clear and I could see how different the same things were-my perceiving them. It wasn't just the historian who was writing that had a different picture, but how I perceived what they were writing was biased by my own, what I brought to the printed word. And so there was that kind of disillusionment. I found myself say, Melvin, in terms of building my case to make the decisions, I said, what would you do if you had all the money you wanted? I said, I'd probably buy a farm and get set up and do it. Do something like that and ranching. So I said to myself, you've already got a farm and pretty well had it paid off then. So I said, well, what is wealth? I dealt with that question and the answer I came up with it was having access to your time and how to use your time. That's really what wealth was to me and I could define it. It made sense to me. If I had freedom to use my time the way I wanted it. I could spend my time making \$40,000-43,000 a year and not have time to do anything else, or I could give up six or seven years of my life to have the money which would allow me to do some things, or I could just do what I could do and cut back on the economic need. And so I said to myself, I think I can make it down on the farm. I won't make very much, but I can get by, then I've got a retirement that can kick in when I'm 60, Social Security when I'm 62, you know, so in other words it wasn't the full venture of having nine kids to raise and just casting my ship on the water. I remember saying to myself I don't want to do this anymore and I'm going to do it. I remember walking out of the old assay office there in Boise where I'd moved my office there in the administrative department and everybody else had gone home. It was 5:30 or 6:00 or something like that and everybody had gone home. And I remember the words coming "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty I'm free at last." Cause I'd made the decision that I was going to do it. And

of course, I was in a marriage to Gail and she had moved up there. I felt badly about this cause she had uprooted herself and moved up there and everything and I was making a decision that would require us to be apart and eventually for her to uproot and move back.

MJ: Did we ever talk about the break between Marlene and Gail and the divorce? When you got divorced and why finally? Are we going to go over that?

MS: No. Yeah, we can do that very briefly. I can do that right now. Well, as I mentioned to you earlier, my getting a divorce from Marlene, we'd been married in the Temple and we'd been married over 26 years. And but the problem that our children were having, getting into alcohol and drugs, not doing well in school, dropping out and truancy, and you know, everything, it just seemed like my life and the expectations we had when we got married and I couldn't do anything about it. We went to counseling and it didn't seem like anything worked that the two of us simply could not pull our act together to set a stable environment in which the children had something to measure against. So I finally said, I gotta get out of this and Marlene was...the stresses and pressures were enough for her that it was a mutual decision and an uncontested divorce in 1979. And we just picked an attorney and had him process it through rather than have any legal hassle. We made a decision how to divide property and the whole thing. It went very smoothly as far as that was concerned. I did some dating, and it was nearly two years before I met Gail and we hit it off and I met her in May and in August we got married so it was a short courtship. She was a very strong independent woman, efficient, a working partner in a marriage that way, and that seemed such a contrast to what Marlene had been able to do and so that was attractive to me. There were signals about things that I wanted out of the relationship that she wasn't interested in giving or couldn't, or didn't need to give, but anyway, even before I got married I picked up some of those signals, but anyway, eventually the intimacy in terms of sharing what was going on inside of her, and being able to do that was very difficult and almost impossible and we just grew further apart and finally emotionally I was just totally divorced from her. And so after I moved...

MJ: Now, was she Mormon?

MS: Well, yes, but not active Mormon. She was not a believer at all, in fact one of the first questions she asked me, on the first date with her, was

Are you ...I think I'm an atheist, Are you an active Mormon, or something like that. I told her I wasn't far behind, that honestly I was probably classified as an agnostic. I didn't know that there wasn't, but I didn't have the kind of certainty in my belief system that I had had at one time. In fact, that had fallen apart for me. So when I made the decision then to leave Idaho, I realized it was going to put stress on the marriage. Gail opposed it, which was understandable. But I said to myself, if it costs me my marriage, I've got to do it. I've got to find out who I am, I've got to find out what's real to Melvin Smith, I don't to end my life living it on terms of what somebody else has told me is reality. So I notified the trustees in the January board meeting. They were shocked and disappointed because they really treated me well and I really treated them well. I'd done a good job for them in the year I was there. I accomplished what I had set out to do, even though I had honestly committed to at least five years in the sense that's what I thought -- that I'd finish my professional career.

MJ: Did they understand how you felt though, did any of them?

MS: Yes, they seemed to understand that and accept it and they wished me well on it. And I've corresponded with two of the members, three of the members since then. The chairman of the board became the new director, Dave Crowder, and Dave had worked for me at the Utah Historical Society when he was a graduate student and Utah University, so I had known him and he was teaching at Ricks College and he decided to go for the job and the trustees appointed him. He, I'm sure has done a good job for them.. Anyway, when I moved down to the ranch I was living in the bunkhouse over here. I just had a woodstove and outdoor plumbing, I didn't have any running water in there. I decided deliberately to live in that environment, starting in farming, I was doing the irrigating, so I was really working hard which was a change of pace. I kept in shaped with my jogging, and everything, but this was lifting, hard work so I would come tired at night and my muscles would be aching and so forth. I liked that -- it was doing something and that doing was telling me I was alive. That was the message I was getting out of it, so I liked that. I wanted to experience life at kind of a mental basis. Almost a Thoreauian approach. And see what was really important and after a month I realized that I wanted a good hot bath and running water and some of those conveniences were important and so I said about trying to get that base. What I wanted was a minimally--0a place to live which was minimal as far as expenses and as self sufficient and independence, in other words I wouldn't have to put anymore in the expense

of living than I actually had to on it, so I ended up buying this mobile home and putting it in here, and it's comfortable. I've got power and water and woodstove and all of this so that I can live very economically. If the pressure was on, I could probably live for about \$300 a month here.

MJ: Now what about you garden? This is something I want you to comment on. What role does your garden play?

MS: OK, now to me, I wanted to be not only, non-conspicuous consumption lifestyle but I wanted to not be polluting, I didn't want to destroy resources in my little way I didn't want to be contributing to the problems in a larger to the community of humanity. And the garden itself was part of my health--trying to live a healthy lifestyle. I'm a farmer--raised on a farm and gardening and I enjoy it. I enjoy watching the plants grow and I like the fresh produce out of the garden and the closeness to it. And the surprisingly the kind of a sense of self-sufficiency even though it's not all that self-sufficie ♦
nt, but at least there
nt, but at least there's that image at least from it.

MJ: It's interesting how you think. You're not thinking like a farmer in that How many acres do I need to make a living here? You're just thinking, I just want to grow some healthy food for myself and I take pleasure in putting my hands in the soil and tilling the soil.

MS: And watching the plants grow.

MJ: Yeah.

MS: And I farmed the place for 2 years, did all the work myself and then would contract the harvesting of the crop usually you sell the standing alfalfa and grain on the farm to a farmer.

MJ: When was this, when you first got back in 88?

MS: In '87 and '88. Yeah. And then I thought, why -- I don't really make much money off all the work I do and it ties me down. And you know, it's obvious that none of my children could make a living off the farm, or are that interested. My son that had been living here moved to Salt Lake for economic reasons. And so I said to keep it as an inheritance for the family

really doesn't make that much sense. What I'm interested in for myself is a beautiful, non-pressure, non-structured environment. I did not want to live where the stop lights and the stop lights and the horns and the patterns of institutions in society were telling me what to do. And I love to be able to go out through the brush and get on a deer trail or a sheep trail and not be held to a rigid, up the right,

MJ: Stop at the stop sign...

MS: turn right thing here. I wanted to disconnect from the patterns from a structured society and an institutionalized society so that I could see why was I doing the things I was doing.

MJ: Is that when you really...now had you divorced Gail by this time?

MS: No, the divorce from Gail came in 1989, so we lived, I would drive back to Boise every 2-3 weeks or she would come down for a weekend. That commuting went from the first of April to November when she finally sold her condominium up there and relocated in Salt Lake City and got a job in Salt Lake City. Then we commuted through, that was in '87 and '88 and I spent most of the weekends in Salt Lake and occasionally she would come down. And I mean, she was trying to make it work too and I was trying to make it work too, but the incompatibility in what we wanted out of the relationship finally I just said, I'm not going to live my life with no more meaning in the relationship than this. And it's not a factor of blaming somebody.

MJ: What do you think she wanted out of the relationship?>

MS: I think she wanted companionship and respectability and so she was satisfied with the marriage. I was a very respectable, faithful person. She's had the experience in her first marriage of infidelity, and she knew she could trust me she knew I was dependable that way and that's what she wanted and that's what she had with me, but in terms of sharing intimacy, sharing soul and feelings and so forth, she just didn't feel a need for it and wouldn't do it and I found I wanted to experience other people, and one of the things I wanted even with Marlene, and one of the things we found when we went to counseling. I said to myself, I would like to know a woman as well as I know myself and want to know myself...another person. And to me that's one of the most generous things that can happen, is to have a person share

themselves, and I don't mean just the physical things, but to share their soul and psyche with another person and that's what I was trying to do and it didn't work, so I said to myself, hey, I'm not going to stay, and it was a very hard decision. I had emotionally divorced from Gail and we had kept our economics separate so there wasn't any problem with that. I said to myself, I'm married to marriage...that's why I'm not getting divorced. So I made the decision, we worked it through and I got divorced ... filed in January and completed in May 1989, we'd been married about 7.5 years.

MJ: That's when you started getting involved, right after that, with Carolyn?

MS: Yes, Carolyn Hollis, and then in that relationship, I just decided here was what I wanted to see, find out, why I was relating, why I had two divorces, why did I end up with two divorces, because I had certainly tried, I was committed, IO wasn't unfaithful. It wasn't any of that kind of thing that could break a marriage up. But I just found that it wasn't working so I really put a lot of energy into that relationship and it was satisfying enough and Carolyn and I think, was enough like my mother, in terms of here was a chance of getting into re-experiencing my childhood, and with the reading I was doing and so forth, and even before I went to the workshop, that was going on and I was using those insights and that new information to learn about myself, what was going on with me, get in touch with my childhood, see what the abusive childhood that I came out of, the impact that had on me, and the cold lack of emotion expression, lack of love for mother as a little child.

<MJ: Now, what were these workshops?

MS: The workshops were this year, in February of '90 and this was a training called impact training in which you--it has to do with getting in touch with the inner child, the subconscious...

MJ: In Salt Lake?

MS: In Salt Lake, yeah. And these were very powerful experiences for me and in that I got in touch with my childhood feelings with dad, and was even able to reclaim the power back from him in one of the exercises they had in there, it was a very emotional thing. I was able to realize that the mother, emotionally, was not there for me. She was a hard working woman, with 10

kids, doing the laundry and doing those meals, hanging them out in the winter, letting that freeze on the line, dry freeze, and all those things. I could see all those things, but in terms of feeling love for mother, I could never really reconnect with that on it. For whatever reasons, but that was my experience as a child and that was having an incredible impact on how I was relating to women. The primary woman in my life, whether it was a wife, or a primary woman in a relationship. But anyway, in working thorough that I finally, with the workshops and everything, gained the insight of what was happening to me and why I was getting married to women and ending up getting divorced. It was because I was marrying women and thinking that some way or other I could move them from point A from where they were, to point B, which was what I wanted in a relationship. The reason I didn't select somebody in Point B, was because I thought what I needed was somebody over in Point A, which was somebody offering the validation that I was OK. I felt I had to be validated by that female. Rationally I knew that was not the case, but emotionally, Inside the child, the experience of mother, that was there. And when I finally got that insight, it just totally changed how I felt about myself and how I could relate. Not only to women, but to other people. The impact, that I have seen in my relationships with other people, now is showing up. I don't have to ... in other words I don't have to be asking for validation from them like I used to. I was asking for validation by my high-level performance, I was asking for validation by talking and my wife, there's this problem with her, my kids, this, or my kid that...all of these things were the child in me saying, see, I've really been working hard, I've been good but...tell me I'm a good person, see. That's what I was asking them to do.

MJ: Do you think that understanding something like that also relieves you of the problem? It seems like if you understand you have a bad habit, it doesn't necessarily cure the bad habit.

MS: Right, exactly. Yeah, just inside by itself, particularly just rational inside, I've had that. And it didn't relieve the problem because I hadn't connected. You see the child inside me was still viewing itself. I mean, the child part of my brain that stored my memories of childhood still viewed itself as not loveable. I hadn't lined up consciously in the adult and taken care of that issue with the child, which I was finally able to do. Once I did that the child was finally able to mourn the fact that he didn't get that I'm OK and then I can go on, but they have a process that they use the help you mourn that you didn't have it. And accepting that and going on with your

life and finding love elsewhere, with other people. There's an abundance of life and love in world you see, and in the workshops the experience you have with other people in the workshop is this experience of love. There's lots of hugging and validation and support and you really feel it, you see. It's a very validating kind of experience to realize that these people that are strangers to you are really can love you and that you can love them. Because the workshop takes you away from the social norms and lets you play games that show you what go on in the norms and lets you see how you're caught up in those patterns and belief systems and those non functional patterns...

MJ: You've always been a thinking person. Do you think that this final act of mourning the child that was within you and getting in tune with your adult self, was a springboard for your mind that allowed your mind to really expand or have you felt that release and have you felt an ability to project beyond where you were?

MS: Yeah, and here's how it showed up. And I mean, it's more than just the insight. I've been doing a lot of reading, a lot of studying, a lot of introspection. I wrote in my journal I wrote six or seven hundred pages and in this last year in my relationship with Carolyn, and most of it deals with that relationship and my reaction to what was going on. In therapy, that writing it out and thinking it through and processing it through you see is a very successful and useful way of handling it. I was really processing a lot of information getting in touch with emotions and working, I mean I was really working hard at it. But the insight by itself doesn't do. You still have to change your life. I'll tell you the impact when I finally made the connection of why I was relating to women as I was, I made that connection with mother, that I found that I was OK, just being, I had read about that and I could understand it and was experiencing it some even so, but what I found now is just being is good enough, I don't have to be doing. I can be a human being, not a human doing. And you know, I thought through about time, what is time and all kinds of things, as the intellectual, the historian dealing with these things. And I find that if I much of the pressure in my life is because there was a time reference to it and I find myself saying now, I find myself at a river and I'm standing on the bank and the river is going by and I've got to get so much done by the time so much river goes by. And I said, how about if I get on the river next time and I float along the river. It's not a matter of doing so much, I just simply...time is the opportunity to be. You float down the river and you experience whatever you see going down the

river...it's not running out on you, do you see what I'm saying? The beginning and end, the Christian and western philosophy, the Greek orientation to reality is that there is a beginning, end and so forth, absolutes, perfect good, all these kind of things that you see we live our lives against those types of references and it's a pressure cooker. And particularly for somebody whose sense of self was by doing, and performance you see. And so there was that change of attitude about time and I found myself say, why is it that important, why is it that important. Now I find myself just saying, I'm OK and when I do things it's because I want to do things. And what's really important to me now, and what has always been the most important is my family, my children. And I worked my heart out trying to be a good father and because of the type of pedagogy I'd lived with, the patterns and the role modeling and the teachings and belief system that I got out of Mormonism and the Smith version of it, the Cowley WY version of it, that was a very dysfunctional and in many cases a very abusive thing for my children. But I did it trying to be a good parent.

MJ: Are you trying to now, in establishing new relationships with your children, trying to rewrite the pages of the past in a way.

MS: Nope, nope. Not in anyway. I'm trying to own them. I'm acknowledging them with my children. I write a letter to my children something like this. The insights I have now, I know that you experienced a lot of pain and a lot of shit, I use the work, a lot of shit in growing up in the Smith family and as Melvin Smith's child and I want you to know that the source of that came from the adults, and a lot of it from me. And not from you as a child. And it's important to you to understand that's where it came from because the child tends to blame him/her self.

MJ: What's been the reaction?

MS: I couldn't believe the reaction! I mean, it was totally unexpected to my children to hear that insight see. And the tenderness that came back from my children. You know, children love their parents. That's been my experience. I see it. I see it in these workshops. Kid that have abused and they still love their parents. And my kids love me in spite of the abuse. But they want to love their parents and by my acknowledging where their pain was, allowed them to be OK, you see what I mean. They didn't have to punish themselves because if you'd been a bad person, you had to punish yourself. Well, if there was shit, and you were punished, the child assumed

he was bad. And by taking responsibility for that my children were freed up and when they were freed up, they wanted to express their love for me. And they have. The tenderness from them was just....

MJ: So you're saying then, it's never too late?

MS: It's never too late in my opinion. It's never too late. And what is, I found, useful in reading I've done and in workshops, is for the parent to be able to acknowledge to the child, and it's important for the child to dump back onto the parent what the parent dumped on them, you see. And it's not blame Daddy or blame Mother week, but the child experiences things and it's important for the child to realize that that expression is what his/her reference is to reality.

MJ: So did you get some of that stuff from your kids after you opened up like that?

MS: Oh, yes! I mean I'll talk to my kids and they'll tell me more about things that went on...you know, their pranks and things that went on behind out back, and how they were manipulating and all those kinds of things. We've got a very open and candid exchange on these kind of things, but what is happening is the child then..my children have to work through with their parents like I've had to work through with me and one of the things I get is, "Dad I want you to know how powerful it is for me and my life, putting my life together, to see you change. It tells me that people can change. And you know, the children that are just 30 years younger than me, the twins, to see them 30 years younger dealing with the exact set of issues, emotional and psychological issues that I'm dealing with.

MJ: So you feel that you can really give them some help at this point in their lives and give them a head start that you didn't get?

MS: That's what I'm hoping and I'm hoping that will be not because I've got the answers, because you can't put the words out of your mouth and put them in the psyche of another person, somehow or other they have to pick it up and gain the insight so it's theirs because it's their issue and their reference is unique. Somehow, their reference is unique. So everybody has his own answers, everybody has to find his own answers. And I mean, I was just full of advice, free, and that's about what it was worth. And I mean, I thought I gave good advice, in terms of being sensible, it was. But in many

cases it came across as a criticism. What I was saying is, you aren't OK the way you are.

MJ: This is how you can improve.

MS: Therefore, you are not OK the way you are. That's how they felt about themselves and that's what they heard. I would start out my letter, how much I love you and how proud I am of you, and the whole thing, and that went off the side of the road because what they were hearing was, Dad's saying I'm not OK again. Part of that was because of the condition of the previous relationship and the abuse in some cases and part of it was simply how they were feeling about themselves.

MJ: Did all the kids respond pretty much the same way? Did they pretty much open up?

MS: Yeah, all of them opened up and you know, when you have nine children with an age difference of 12 years or something like that, you're going to have the parent experiencing the children, their lives going in different ways, but in terms of the relationship, I've been able to establish a personal relationship with all of them.

MJ: It sounds like this has been the most powerful relationship that you've ever had with them.

MS: Oh, it is, just and I have learned so much from them. That's what's incredible to me, how much I've learned from them. Like I said, how much children love when the doors are opened for them to love. And I mean, it surprised me, and I find myself saying I haven't learned this much love from my kids, how come I'm getting it? That's back to that old reference. But, that's another way of looking at life. The natural thing, the normal natural thing is love. You read some peoples reality of love, like the book, Love is Getting Go of Fear that Jan Paulsky has written. And the only reality really is love. And when we have fear in our lives we create a false reality. It's not the way it really is. But it becomes a false reality, and we act as if it is so.

MJ: What did you say the letters in Fear stood for according to AA?

MS: False expectations about reality, or false experience about reality. And

what we fear, we create. I feared that you see, I wouldn't be validated by a woman. And lo and behold by asking and asking and manipulating, and trying to control and trying to do so much you see, and trying to get them to be where I wanted them to be so they could do things for me, they wouldn't do it.

MJ: We forgot what that other one was? What was it fuck everything...

MS: Fuck everything and run?

MJ: Fuck everything and run. I can relate to that. I must be getting tired..I lost my train of thought.

MS: Anyway, continuing about this sense of reality and the children's response to it, I look at an alcoholic daughter and I find myself saying if I'm going to have anything out of this relationship with this human being, with my daughter, because she's still active as an alcoholic, I had to do something. I couldn't change her. I tried to change her and I was trying to give this subtle suggestion and this loving guidance on the one hand or the other and I heard her mouthing back to me one time exactly what she needed to do and I says she knows what she needs to do better than I do, so why am I giving her advice? And, I said, how do I have anything out of this relationship? I found, first of all, I could not control another person, which I had tried to do. I had tried to control my children, train them up the way they should go and she taught me that I couldn't do that. I just couldn't do it. And I accepted that. I learned that, and she was the main teacher on that. And, that I could not be absolutely responsible for another human being. No way that I could finally be responsible for her. I just couldn't do it. I had no control, therefore I couldn't be responsible for her in an absolute sense. It has nothing to do with loving and being in somebody's life, but Being responsible. She had to be responsible because she decided to drink because I had nothing to do with that. And if she got drunk and killed herself or whatever happened, that was her choice. And once she started to drink, made the choice to drink, she had no control over it because she was an alcoholic. And third thing was, that if I was going to experience love with my daughter, and to love her, I was simply going to have to love her just the way she was -- I had to accept her just the way she was. And that was incredibly powerful dimension of it -- when I could see this gal who was an alcoholic, and say, I accept you just the way you are, it's kind of the AA, let go and let God.

MJ: Are you realistic in your latest approach with your kids? This is an approach, obviously something you have resigned yourself to but do you feel like it's going to have any effect at all on their lives--is it going to change their lives at all?

MS: Oh, the evidence of that is so apparent, and it's not only evidence of what I'm doing for their lives, but they have been doing it for mine. They're into recovery programs of one form or another, and not only between children and parent, but between siblings. They're into recovery and they're starting to relate to each other in healthy days. They're being honest. They're getting honest feedback. They're not playing games like we used to play in the sick, dysfunctional family and the sick, dysfunctional society that we live in where, how are you today? oh, I'm fine. and you're madder than hell and you know, we play games. and to get this kind of honesty, to me to have someone to be able to tell me honestly who and how they are and give me feedback about the experience me, and get it honestly rather than sugar coat it, you know what I mean, or give it back from their own bias and anger, I Mean, that's a miracle. I see myself as I am to those people, whether they're right or not, that's their issue, that's how they're experiencing it.

MJ: This all ties in with what you were talking about before, your letters about reality. You were searching for reality. What is real? I don't think you'd have any truck with anyone who wasn't real, or tried not to be honest with you about how they perceived you, how they perceived life, how they perceived themselves. And I got that impression and what I'm saying here is not only your relationship with your kids, but you've been going through a whole sort of mental revolution for awhile.

MS: Yeah, that's true. And it's been in process. You know, I talked earlier about the jogging and what's happening that I found a reference that broke out of the pattern. And jogging and measuring myself against myself. That was coming at something that there wasn't answers already set up for me, so I got a perception to break out of a relationship.

PHONE CALL

MJ: OK, We're back on.

MS: OK, and what this approach did for me was to really ask questions for the first time. I asked my own questions rather than somebody else's questions, where there was always somebody else's answers.

MJ: Well, now what happened in your, I know this is a little off the track, but um, you're last relationship that you had with Carolyn Hollis, this seems like the point where you discovered exactly what it was that you were seeking and how it was dysfunctional to you.

MS: Yeah, I worked through most of my relationships, in terms of administrating it as administrator I related well to my employees, I could listen to them, I could hear them, I was secure in doing that and I finally worked through with my children so I was starting to get a good relationship with them even before these last insights that I've just delineated a little earlier. But I knew that I had not gained an insight to as to why I was relating to women the way I was and I didn't want to go into another marriage until I got that insight.

MJ: This relationship was then tending toward marriage?

MS: Oh yes, clearly. We really hit off and we talked about it very early on, within 3-4 weeks that it was going that way. And I'd gotten into Hormel Hendricks "Guide for Couples on Marriage" and other books dealing with this concept. So I really felt that there were answers. And I really applied that -- I read the book twice and really applied it to her being the amalgam of how I saw woman, the important woman in my life, which was a composite of mother and other people, so that was the attraction there. Other than that I was getting in touch with other feelings and I made a commitment this time to make feelings the way to run things rather than letting my head run the show. Which has been so typical of me. I realized that I might really get hurt -- a broken heart so to speak, but I said, hey, I want to know. There was enough of a formula or pattern for me in this book that made sense to me and as I applied it I could see it. I was getting insights and gaining in everything, so I really worked at it and I got into touch with feelings about childhood and feelings about mother and I'd find myself being able to process with Carolyn about feelings and ...

MJ: So that part of it was going OK, but it seems to me, in the process of your self-canalization, it was fortunate that she had a certain reaction to your relationship, and she started putting demands, more and more...I mean things

happen in such a way that luckily for both of you, it didn't work out.

MS: Well, yeah. I don't think there was any luck in it myself. I think, in other words, there are no accidents. That's kind of the way, in terms of this therapy approach type of thing, you don't look at things as accidents. And I think that what was happening, was were getting real, I was getting real in particular and I'd been in workshops and I was trying to apply the tools of that workshop to the relationship and I really wanted it to work out. But more than that I wanted to find out why I was doing the way I was cause I could see that I was putting up with behavior from her that I didn't like. I didn't like the way she treated me a lot of the time. I was putting up with it, saying oh, it's not that important because there were lots of goods, and that was really good, you see. But I didn't like a lot of things too, and that was denial on my part too. And I would hear Mother's old scripts telling me to do things and I wanted Mother's power, I wanted the power that Mother had over my life to take it back and I find myself saying, "God dammit, Mother, Edetha Smith, take your scripts and leave." I found that I could regain power by doing that. It was a way of owning that I was in charge of my life and that was effective. There were all these processes, we're talking about a 14 month period of working intently in this, you see.

MJ: What is the concept then? What is the abundance of the universe concept?

MS: OK. For me, and I'm using the language and insights that come from the workshop. But the abundance of the Universe, that whatever created us, God, the Great Spirit, your Universe, evolution- -- that creative force that created us, made us in it's image so that when we were born we were in tune with or aligned with that force of creation, you see, so we were in touch with God. Or we were in touch...

MJ: Sort of an innocence of youth type thing.

MS: Well, yes, it's that, but it's more than that. It's not just innocence. It's communication of sorts. Like a child aligned can look at somebody and say I don't like them, and they don't know why necessarily, they may know why, but they just seem to have a sense. But the universe does not create us to destroy us, it creates us to nurture and productive and so forth. It doesn't offer guarantees necessarily, absolute, but it isn't..it's purpose isn't to create then destroy. That makes sense to me, and so how do you tap into that

abundance. You stay aligned to it like when you were created or attuned, the reason we get out of alignment or out of tune with that universe is because what happens, the human brain, our brain is so powerful and we have language that sets up value systems, perceptions of reality, and other things, you see, that override that or that sensing...you just feel it.

MJ: Now we're tying into this whole idea of premises and the Mormon faith, right? I mean in your life. You accepted certain premises as givens, and those premises were not necessarily aligned with ...

MS: That's right. That becomes your belief through the system, and that belief system becomes a part of the sub-conscious or the unconscious they call it, as well as the conscious. And what happens, instead of our being aligned, we get our identity of ourselves by the experiences we have, teachings, the pedagogy we're subjected to so we develop belief systems, fixed attitudes about what's so, so if you're raised with a bias against blacks and you see a black you get an immediate reaction and it has nothing do with the reality of the present moment that's out there, it's just how you react because of that fixed belief system. And so it puts you out of alignment ... the creative moment is right now -- now is when we're living. And if we're tied to a bias, if we're tied to belief system, if we're tied to the past experiences, we can't be in tune with it.

MJ: What is that noise?

MS: I don't know. It must be something in town.

MJ: OK,

MS: So, what the workshops were designed to do was help people recognize that they had these belief systems and to get in touch with them, you know, and with the experience like me, not being loved by Mother as a little tiny child, I developed a fixed belief system inside my head that I was not loveable. The little child believed that you see, well, it goes into the unconscious. I could say consciously, hey, you're just as loveable as somebody else, you're a nice looking guy, you're all of these things. I could say all of that -- you're intelligent and I could build a case for that and believe it. I think it was honest, but how I felt inside, you see, I wasn't connected that way. I wasn't lined up. And the workshops helped me line up, get in touch with the child's feelings and realize that Mother's feelings,

emotionally and loving was not there. And, you know, for whatever reason.

MJ: OK, finally, and to work into what we're going to talk about tomorrow morning...How does the Mormon upbringing fit into that misconception about what life was about or whatever?

MS: OK, the Mormon belief system, like any absolute belief system, has all the answers. And in my case, the impact of that on me was, in order to tap into the blessings of God, there's a law upon which all blessings were predicated. You had to do in order to qualify. Rather than just be. That was a primary difference. You had to do the things in order to qualify for the blessings. For me, my prayer would be basically, God, I've got this blessing over here I would like, and will you forgive me my sins, will you help me to understand what I need to do in order to qualify for the blessing, and I'll do it, and if you've got some reason why I shouldn't have it -- if you don't have any reason why I shouldn't have it then would you give me the blessing. Now that's not a very strong premise with which to tap into the abundance of the universe, you see. And it's my feeling now that the behavior in terms of righteousness and what's right and what's wrong, doesn't have much meaning. I think it has to do with people being lined up with themselves, with their head and their conscious and unconscious communicate so that when you say I want that, or this is real to me, it's real to the unconscious as well as the conscious. My intention is to do this. And if it's real for you, then for the conscious and unconscious, then you've got the resources of both of those working for you and then that's how you tap into the abundance of the universe. All of it's working for you. Lots of times, you see, our unconscious is going -- want's that and our conscious wants that, so we work against ourselves.

MJ: So, you go on intuition based on trust?

MS: Trust yourself. Well, on intuition, there's a bias molded into a word like intuition. But you go on feelings. And it is a kind of intuition.

MJ: I see by your charts on the wall, and maybe you can explain those charts. By those charts you are encouraged to go on first impressions. You are encouraged to open. You are encouraged to expand outward.



MS: That

MS: That's right. You're to trust yourself and listen to all of yourself, to feelings, you see. And for me to teach me what feelings were. Well, I'm not feeling too good. When in fact the feeling is, my hands are sweaty. That's a feel, see what I mean. I've got a pain right here ... that's a feeling. And I was so closed down to feelings that I couldn't even get in touch with feelings. I traveled in my head all the time. I reasoned it out and figured it out. That's not a very powerful and productive way of dealing with life. Of what -- you're shutting out all of the unconscious. The conscious is what -- 10% of the brain capacity -- so there's some way or another that most are not using it.

MJ: They say that if all the things that were in our mind -- being expressed momentarily in our mind -- were actually expressed, people would freak out. That's one of the things that would come out of people's minds.

MS: Well, I found for myself, when I decided to come down here, I'm going to run an experiment about life. And I'm going to -- I want to know what a human being is. The way I'm going to do that, I'm going to study a human being, and the human being Melvin Smith was going to study was Melvin Smith. So, Melvin Smith was a scientist and Melvin Smith was the subject of science, but he was also the laboratory in which the experiment took place. So then I said to myself, How do I get me to talk to me? How do I get my body to talk to me? How do I get my subconscious to talk to me?

MJ: Well, first of all, you probably rid yourself of a lot of extraneous stuff.

MS: Yeah, that type of thing. But when I got down to it, I said, hey, I've got to love myself. Cause if I'm nice to people, I get a lot more out of them than if I don't. So I began to look at myself and said, how do I treat myself? Well, I make a mistake, you dumb fool, you see? You should have used... See, I didn't treat myself very nice. I kept beating up on myself. I parented me as I'd been parented by my parents. So I visualized myself as a third party sitting in a chair, and then said, now, that's my best friend. How would I treat him? If he makes a mistake, I'd say, Hey, no big deal. See what I mean? It's gone, or if I found myself being able to say if I met Melvin Smith on the street, I'd want to stop and talk to that guy. Because I think he'd be a really interesting person to talk to. That's loving yourself. And owning that I really want, you see. Where before there was a tendency to put myself down. So I worked at that positive reinforcement and loving

myself. I found that my body began to talk to me more, I began to pick up what pain meant, all these things.

MJ: Kind of like that song, accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, yeah.

MS: Yeah, in terms of a formula, that's very useful.

MJ: Well, these ideas in then that you're picking up in the workshops are not new. Because there's nothing new under the sun.

MS: Well, I think there are .. You see, you're right that the training has been around for 20-25 years, so in that sense it's not new at all. But see when you use the expression there's nothing new under the sun, I don't believe that at all. I think that everything, in a sense, is new under the sun. Because I think that you are and I are unique people. Each human being is unique and the conscious awareness from each of us is unique. Nobody else sees reality just exactly the way Mark Junge does or that Melvin Smith does or that whoever does.

MJ: And when you think about yourself, as they say, you know, in the stream of history, you don't step into that stream twice. You don't step into the same place twice.

MS: Exactly. And then, if you move in the cosmic input and the neutrinos and our body is changing, the elements in our body and the components come out of different -- you know we've got electrons in us now that may have been in the moon or may have been...see what I'm saying. Well, does that element have a history also, and does that history have an impact on that particle like we have a history ourselves, you see? And if it does, those little minuscule changes, those nuances, tune the instrument a little differently so that how we see it, the instrument being us, not just the body, not just the brain, not just the senses, but us...

MJ: Where does all that lead to though, all that recognition? That you ultimately, I mean I guess you could come to the conclusion that really we can't achieve any kind of control because that whole thing...not only is the world changing we're changing within that and so in a way you could become fatalistic about this whole thing and say, well, there's not really a whole hell of a lot I can do.

MS: Yeah, you could take it that direction, but the direction is, hey, I'm part of the creative force. I am part of the cosmos. And I can make a difference. I don't know how important that is, but Melvin Smith does make a difference.

MJ: By tapping into the universe maybe?

MS: Well, that, you know is significant in terms of what it is for me. In think thoughts are real. And they talk about a morphogenic field you know that if there is a field of creativity like a magnetic field or a gravitational field, and the creative field that has to do with something, you see, that morphogenic field, then it's easier for other people to do things because that's been created by somebody else. Well, living in the present moment we become forces of creation. In that sense we are God-like. God was a creator. We become God in that sense. We participate -- we are one with God. It's a way of looking at it you see. In a sense we belong to the universe.

MJ: Who was it in history that actually promulgated that theory -- that we are God, we are one and the same, God is within us, we are within God, we are one and the same? Ah, heck, I mean, this isn't a new idea either.

MS: But how -- but it's new in the sense that our sense of the cosmos is different, our concept of the body, the chemistry -- you see what I'm saying?

MJ: I think what is new, the sense of it's newness, is for Melvin Smith, there's a lot new that's new and changed in his life.

MS: Hell, yeah. But see, but nobody -- nobody finally perceives the reality of this just the way I do. And it's not a matter of my being correct, but maybe what I perceive is a factor of what exists. Even scientists are beginning to look at physics this way. That the reality -- there isn't an objective reality out there to be observed. They thought, you know, in quantum physics, reductionism, you could break it down into the smallest unit and then put it back together and tell all about it, and finally it began to break down. They couldn't figure out what they were measuring. Is life a wave or a particle, a proton or a wave length, so what are you measuring? See what I'm saying? What do you perceive, you know. We call it a chair - - that thing, and a table. Is that what it is?

MJ: We've agree that it will be, yeah.

MS: OK. But you see, we created that. It isn't just something that exists. I don't mean that the chair isn't there. But the meaning of it, so for me, what I find this is, that it's an empowering kind of experience for me, both in terms of in this concept being a part of the universe, and tapping into the abundance of the universe and simply by being, I have an impact on the lives of the people that are important to me. That's a powerful thing, you see.

MJ: OK, well boy, I could just go on and on and on in this line of thinking. You've obviously done a lot of reading. But I do tend to think the same though several times about you, Mel. I wonder--your thinking processes started changing before you actually retired. Obviously you wouldn't have quit the job up in Idaho if you hadn't been sort of testing the waters or at least beginning to seriously doubt what you were doing and where you were going, but it seems now with your retirement that you're spending a lot of time and energy discovering things that maybe for years were buried in the muck. Is that right?

MS: Yeah, you're right on. And what I'm finding is that I'm being able to reclaim all of me that was so shut down because of the abusive childhood, in the sense of the physical abuse from Dad and Mother, of the absence of their being present, in the abuse of a very stringent pedagogy that came out of the family but was also supported by the church, the community and the school systems, that said these are the answers, no you're not supposed to think those things, don't ask questions, all of those in one form or another, came across, you see. There was also the limited amount of information that was available at that time too, you see, in terms of what did those people know and how did they approach it. So it's not a matter of being critical of them, it's just simply a description of what was the experience of my history.

MJ: Has any other member of the family gone through what you've gone through?

MS: No, no.

MJ: Why? Aren't they as bright as you are?

MS: Oh, yeah, it's interesting, you see, out of ten children, my oldest

brother has gone into transcendental meditation and finds himself with still some religious commitment, but not a solid religious commitment to Mormonism. But leaning and finding some satisfaction in reincarnation. My second brother was an inventor. Is very staunch in the church. My third brother finds the church -- he can't associate with it at all because the pain of that--psychic pain--for him is so great that he just hardly have anything to do with the family. He makes statements like, "The Mormon church is the worst thing that ever happened in my life." My oldest sister is very active in the church, you know, and lives her life according to that, but the family problems, the families dysfunctions show up in all the families, all the siblings families in one form or another and are passed on to the next generation in one way or the other. Myself, I'm the next child. I'm not affiliated -- I'm still a Mormon and it's my heritage and I take some pride in that identity, but I'm not active in the church, nor do I believe what the church teaches, in fact there's some things about the church teachings that I think are very dysfunctional and even negative. My brother younger than me is very active in the church, still believing in it. My sister next younger than him is kind of -- believes but isn't active on it. Another brother younger than in her is not active in the church, although he raised his kids in the church and they've been - they're all very active in the church. The next to youngest brother is active in the church and the youngest brother is really into transcendental meditation and went back to Fairfield Iowa where the international Maharishi?? University is. I mean this Smith Family is a very dynamic, questioning kind of thing. Whether that's the kind of thing Joseph Smith Sr., you've got those connections and have to ask the questions about the genetics of this situation.

MJ: Yeah, you do. And I would ask that question. Do you think there is something in the genes, something very special there, because Joseph Smith is obviously very special--he's the founder of the religion.

MS: Right. And you know, I don't know how to deal with that. I've asked that question and I come back to myself and say, OK what happened to you. And I just don't know, but I know -- why didn't I go into teaching seminary and institute to the religious rather than staying with history?

MJ: Well, some of it was historical circumstance.

MS: But I had the opportunity. Two opportunities were facing me when I was at BYU and I could have gone either way. Because the opportunity was

there and I'd have probably gotten more direct support if I'd gone into religion and the other, you see, from the institution.

MJ: Well, you had the opportunity too, of either of going to Idaho or Snow College.

MS: No, I didn't have the opportunity of going to Snow College. Because when I interview on that job I didn't get any support and I said a bird in the hand....

MJ: Oh, that's right.

MS: But what I'm saying is there was something that kept me moving with my education. And when I talk about some type of mystic force, I don't -- I haven't really got a handle on that yet, as to why I was doing that. Good hell, I mean I had all these kids coming along and I should have been into a second job and teaching, stayed at NW College and got another job, you know what I mean?

MJ: Well, something funny just occurred to me. When we went to the Mormon Miracle Pageant last at Manti, the opening scenes in the pageant showed Joseph Smith questioning, with there three groups of people. He, like the others, was questioning which was the proper religion, you know. He had this, these deep-seated doubts about what constituted the true religion, and he searched and he searched and he pondered and so forth, and in a way, that's what you're doing. If there's a sort of a comparison that can be made there, there's a recurrence of that in your question.

MS: Yeah, I never thought of it just like that Mark, but that...there really is a valid -- in my own way, you see, I never questioned Mormonism for a long time. But in a sense, you see,

MJ: But now you are. Whether it happened twenty years ago, well, in Joseph Smith's case it happened as a young man. And here you are 62 and you're questioning.

MS: And you last 20-22 years have been...

MJ: A series of questions.

MS: Very, very much so. Well, it was always a question. I always wanted to know how it was that God could be perfect and not change if there was eternal progression. If there was eternal progression, how could you be in the lower kingdom of heaven if there was progression, and not get eventually up to where the higher kingdom was. The questioning was always there, some way or other, and I don't know why those questions existed -- I really don't. I don't feel I have any insight.

MJ: I guess that the least you could say is that maybe, maybe, there was such a thing as a genetic predisposition towards things -- towards rebellion, questioning, curiosity, intellectual curiosity...

MS: You see, my brother, Fred, his curiosity went into creating and inventing, you know. Incredibly inventive and made his living doing it. Which is a form of creativity, but when it comes to the church, he didn't move that way at all. In fact, he's just very rigid in terms of what he'd except.

MJ: Yeah, in fact, just as Smith's thinking caused a revolution, a religious revolution, and you know, what's happened to you in the last year has been a revolution. Your thinking has gone through a kind of revolution.

MS: Yeah, and what is interesting, at a time I felt a need for you know, a kind of moral imperative? To find the truth, which of course would be -- who hasn't been looking for that in Western culture, you know for. . including Mormon. And I found myself, finally being able to...I had to come up with something that would come up with the truth for me, my truth, and you would find your truth and it would be true for you and I didn't have to change you and I realized that your history and makeup, the history in your conscious called Mark, is different than the instrument that is Melvin, both in terms of make-up and in terms of experientially, so how can we perceive things the same. You know, you build a radio differently, we'd have a radio that picks up one thing. We have a television that picks up something else. Because it's made differently. And you know, one of the things that I found as I began to quiet myself down, I was able to pick up things that the static of life...You see, one of the reasons I moved here was to get the static of the institutionalized life out of my life. So that I could listen to me, this thing I was experiencing. I needed to have a quiet environment to experience it and if you're always got a clock setting and this and everything running and regulating your life, there's too much static to hear

the beautiful music that's coming in. Simply the static of business and so on. I thought that these idiot savants and even geniuses were people that were somewhere and able to shut out the static and tune in. Much of why we aren't using the brain at the level we are is that people can't shut it out and the static overrides.

MJ: And sometimes we allow that static to override because of just plain fear and trepidation. You mean, it's a lot more comfortable to have that static in your life than to face some of the questions you'd have to face.

MS: You apply the metaphor very validly, I think.

MJ: Well, I'll tell you, we don't want to run this side of the tape out. Tomorrow, do you think we could run very succinctly through the stages of your thinking because really that's what I came here for, but what I've gotten is much more than that and I appreciate that, but I think that would be...

MS: I'll try to present a succinct presentation of that.

MJ: Have you thought about it enough to put it down on paper? You mentioned to me there were about three distinct periods.

MS: What I can give you I think, is a very brief, almost an outline, almost a thesis statement on it and I think that's what you're after.

MJ: Great, We'll pick it up tomorrow.

BREAK

16 July 1990

Mark Junge talking to Melvin Smith at his home at Mel Pleasant

MS: Yeah, I'm here.

MJ: Just as an introductory statement, I'd say, Mel, that it's a long road that you've come down in your life and thinking.

MS: Yeah, that's really true -- a good definition of it. I divided up, into it's starting to fall into three categories. I've thought of titling an autobiography of myself, a book that I do plan on writing, "The Paradigms of Paradise." A

paradigm being an attitude, a methodology, an approach of looking at reality. And paradise, the absolute answers, the perfection or heaven or whatever. Those three paradigms would be, first of all, the one I grew up with, being a devout, believing, true believer of Mormon in rural agricultural, northern Wyoming, pioneer settlement that I grew up in. I grew up believing absolutely that this was the part of the Lord's vineyard that I should be in. Then I had the opportunity of schooling, of a good education. I found the motivation and the opportunity of getting a degree, Ph.D. in history and finally to teach at the college level. Then work historical society and have contacts nationally with people, so I got a very broad as well as deep education in an intellectual history and ideas. I found that then, coming to a sense of what was right and good, in an intellectual, rational approach, which was a challenge. Of course, some of the very basic things about Mormonism I'll go into later on in my religious belief. I found still in terms of my life and how I felt about myself and what was happening in my family, which to me has always been primary and so important, that it was still, a lot of things weren't working and a lot of dysfunction. And I got into what I identify now as a family systems analysis of the kind of therapy or approach, it's a paradigm, about looking at a human being as a creature of the family and what we are and how we see ourselves, comes out of the experience of childhood. And that's created a whole new way of looking at the world.

MJ: OK. That's a real good summary of the three paradigms or the three schemes. Can we go back and explore each one in depth now?

MS: OK. Now for me, the reality that I knew as a true believing Mormon was that God was in heaven and the earth was created for mankind to come down here and get a body, work out his salvation, eventually become like God. Part of that process was the ordinances and authority within the Mormon church and the family having a large family because there were spirit children up in heaven waiting to come with this last dispensation, and my parents had ten children and so I end up having nine children. It was that acting out the pattern and formula -- Straight is the gait and narrow the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it. -- And such statement that there is no reward in life that makes up for failure in the family -- all these kind of things. And so to me, the myth and teachings of the Mormon church answered all the questions.

MJ: There were premises like you said -- certain premises.

MS: Right. That God is in heaven, he created the world, he created it for a reason. Why are we here, you know. They had tracts, missionary tracts, that said why are we here, where are we going after -- the plan of salvation and it all fit together very, very precisely. And if you did what was right, and you could have the holy ghost in your life and you could perform the ordinances and through the ordinances and obedience, receive the grace of Christ for your redemption, salvation and exaltation. And that to me made sense. Part of that was going on a mission, being married in the temple for time and all eternity, being morally clean and observing of wisdom, the health code and being active in the church. And you know, if you were faithful God would open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing you wouldn't be able to receive and so forth. So I was very diligent in being that. I was always a leader in the organization of the church. I was made a high priest as a young man, I was in the bishopric as a student at UW, which was evidence that they were recognizing that I was a good Latter Day Saint.

MJ: You were following that straight and narrow path.

MS: That's right. And so the society and the institutions were telling me, hey, this guy is doing all right. But deep inside myself I didn't feel like a good person. I felt guilty, I felt I was sinful. I had faults and all of these things and I could just never get rid of it. And finally I remember saying to myself, you know, if you spend all your time worrying about your sins, you're not going to spend much time doing the positive things. So I made a deliberate decision to kind of forget what appeared to be sins in my life and just go ahead with the positive things. That was an important step. And I believe that. I went through the University of Wyoming and got my Bachelor's and Masters' Degrees, very much a true believer and went on the Brigham Young University for my Ph.D. program. I was worried about because the book of Mormon talks about, "To be learned is good, but not at the risk of your faith." But at BYU then I would daily read in the book of Mormon as a way of keeping me in tune with things that were really important.

MJ: So that your intellectual life wouldn't get away from you.

MS: That's right. It wouldn't override my spiritual life. And Marion G. Romney, when I was in the Navy, spoke to us when I was at book camp.

MJ: Who was that?

MS: Marion G. Romney, who eventually became one of the members of the first presidency of the church. He said when he had gone to law school he read the book of Mormon and he found that it had done that for him, so that was kind of a pattern for me to follow. I found that with my study of history I became aware of the fact that so many so-called witnesses and evidences of the truth of the book of Mormon, of Joseph Smith as a prophet of God, were really historical records or documentations and that there was a great deal of debate about how accurate that record was and was that record was actually saying. And eventually, you know, I came to realize for myself that spiritual knowledge is an act of faith and I'm not saying that people don't have some type of spiritual manifestation or experience from some source, that could be very real in their lives, but it's not a rational, logical experience. In other words, knowledge comes from some other source. And what I found was happening with me, and I still find it with my colleagues in history, and many people is, that they start with a premise, that such and such is true, and then build the argument of why that can be supported. And they really haven't added anything to their initial premise. The archeology in Central America, in the minds of some people, proves the Book of Mormon. Well, you get the competent archeologists, who don't have that initial premise, that the Book of Mormon is the word of God, and none of them see the archeological evidence that Central America is tying in with the Book of Mormon at all. If you start with the other premise you can supposedly build the evidence to support what you presume to be the case in the first place. You really haven't gone anywhere. I found myself just kind of educating myself away from the types of things that had been the basis of my testimony. The rationalizing, you know. I remember during my testimony up in Powell Wyoming during my teaching up there. I was teaching seminary and institute programs and saying, you know, if the angel Moroni appeared to me, I don't know if I'd know anymore about the truth of the Book of Mormon than I do now. And I mean, I said that very sincerely, as I look back on it, I realize that what I was just had come up with a logical kind of thing, you know. If Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and he was the author, and he would tell the truth if he was a prophet of God, and if he said this was the Book or Mormon was true and that was how he did it, then that's how he did it. I mean, why do I need anymore evidence than that, you see.

MJ: In a way, that would have been a heretical statement, right?

MS: Yeah,

MJ: I mean, a little shocking to the faithful to hear you say something like that.

MS: Well, I mean, I didn't carry that explanation through to them, you see, but I find it just analyzing myself.

MJ: You were just thoroughly immersed in all the religion. You didn't need anything.....

MS: Right, right. I got powerful affirmation from the Mormon community for the kind of behavior that I was taking on. So the second phase for me then, is kind of the intellectual life and what was happening there. There was not only the education that I was getting was opening me up to realizing that many statements of church leaders and authorities figures -- church authority figures in my life -- much of the information they had was simply coming from very human sources, and one of the examples of that was Ezra Taft Benson's support of the John Birch Society. I was able through my own studying, to trace back expressions he was giving as an apostle were coming from the blue book of the John Birch Society which had come from Oswald Spangler's interpretation of history and as a historian I was able to say that Spangler is not that respected in the community anymore in terms of his general interpretation of history, so therefore... So, if Benson is coming to his conclusion from using Spangler as a source, translated to ??? (876) it's not too impressive to me. I began to ask those kind of questions and through my study at Brigham Young of history, where I really got into history in depth, I hadn't done that in my programs at Wyoming because they were too broadly based, American Studies and Social Studies. I began to see that history could tell you that people could perceive the source of history as, you know, for me, God was the force of history as a believing Mormon. It was HE who was making things happen finally. I realized there were ideas you could have, Karl Marx's materialistic interpretation, and you could have Spangler, and other people, that what was causing it you know, was the nature of human beings, or nature itself, or...and so on. But there was another way of looking at history and explaining what was going on. And so history began to make sense to me. I then began to intellectually disconnect from some of the absolutes of the Mormon church. That process was driven and speeded up by virtue of the fact that my faithful performance as a

believing Latter Day Saint was not addressing needs of my family. My children began to get into drugs, alcohol and problems. I went to church for help, I went to Mental Health for counseling for me and my family, and in other words, my family life simply wasn't working and it was supposed to be. If you will do, then it'll work out. If you're faithful, it'll work out, and it wasn't. I could blame myself, not having been good enough you know. And I did that and was guilty and all that type of thing. I could blame my wife, Marlene, you know. She hadn't performed well enough, but it didn't make any difference in terms of dealing with the issues. And I cared enough about my family that that issue I had to some way deal with. Because my life was falling apart for me, with my family going down the tube like that. And the other thing, as I mentioned earlier, was getting into jogging. Where I began to have an experience of Melvin, by himself. And measuring me against my reality rather than against what the authorities were saying was so and what was important. I was experiencing myself, saying I'm up one day and down the next, or why do I feel strong today or ... it was a reference that began and it released a lot of stress and I found myself experiencing learning insights other than just the logical rational processes that I'd been using in the past. And that was very powerful for me. So I did a lot of reading in self-help books. I found myself reading not only a lot of history, but reading physics about the make-up of the universe, Einstein's Theory of Relativity, different interpretations of how the scientists see the world. And I began to realize that the basic arguments of Christianity were that, the classic arguments were, how do you explain the universe if it isn't God? And, of course, with these -- Darwin's Theory of Evolution you basically have a logical explanation. How accurate it was can be challenged I guess. And then, you know, Einstein's Theory of Relativity and Time, and Freud's insights into the psyche and make-up of a human being, in other words, these were the intellectual explanations that began to pose meaningful alternative ways of interpreting what all of this was about. So I found myself looking at this and using it and particularly the psychology to useful dividends in terms of dealing with my own life and dealing with my children. So this was kind of the intellectual paradigm that moved me into a somewhat agnostic position. No longer was God real to me in the sense that, I hadn't been able to make it work. I hadn't been able to get God into my life to where I could see a clear connection between my behavior and the result.

MJ: OK, now I see that's all sort of new to me. What I suspected...Here you had a big problem with your family and that was one of the motivations

for you to try to understand in another way, since it was very well connected with the Church, you had to get away from the Church in order to be able to view it in a different way. I understand that now. But I thought that, I guess that I was under the preconception that, especially in the years that you and I were jogging together on various trips around the country, that just through the process of study, through the study of history, through the study of whatever you were reading, that you came to some conclusions about Church doctrine that made you doubt that such and such had happened. Like, you know, anybody might doubt the virgin birth. Or they might doubt the feeding of the 5000 or something like that.

MS: Right. And that's an important process of the disconnecting. That was true and that was a necessary process. I guess I'm kind of jumping over that.

MJ: You should. I guess you should, but I kind of wanted to point that out.

MS: That is correct, and I had to disconnect and so I had no bitterness toward the Church and I'm not uncomfortable around the Church and Church membership now. In fact I still identify myself as a Mormon but,

TAPE 4

OK, THIS IS TAPE #4, TESTING, MEL, SAY SOMETHING.

MS: Yeah, are we OK?

MJ: Today is the 16th of July, 1990 and this is tape #4, believe it or not, of Mel Smith talking about his life and we were at the point where, do you want to continue into the next sphere now, from intellectualizing things?

MS: Let me just finalize that now, and then go into family systems. I found that ♦
that it is necessary, in order to move into new concepts, you have to let go of old ones, especially when they
that it is necessary, in order to move into new concepts, you have to let go of old ones, especially when they're absolute. And the belief system in Mormonism is so absolute, that in some way or another I had to be able to disconnect. One of the ways I found that disconnecting happening is defined

in history -- what people said about Joseph Smith, upon which I had based my original belief system, simply was historically inaccurate.

MJ: Can you give me just a few incidents?

MS: Well, that the account of the first vision of Joseph Smith where he saw God and the Father and so forth. Well, the evidence is that the first reports of that did not have two persons standing in heaven, but there was a spirit there. And in some cases it was Jesus Christ, not God the Father and Jesus Christ. Ah, you have that type of example. Joseph Smith translating the Book of Mormon -- where he supposedly had the breastplates and it supposedly happened just because he had access to that. The actual historical reports of his translating are accounts of him using a peepstone in a hat and putting the hat up to his face, covering his face and looking into that dark peepstone ostensibly reading exactly what the translation was.

MJ: A peepstone?

MS: Yeah, which was a, you know, they used them, people would dig a well or find, come across a translucent stone or something and it was supposedly a peepstone. They could find hidden treasures and other kinds of things, you see. Joseph Smith's extra marital activities in the name of polygamy, and even before that, you see, the historical record shows him as this kind of man, so if you're...and the argument was look what a wonderful man, so believe, see. The historical record says hey, this guy had feet of clay, now do you not believe because he had feet of clay, see what I'm saying? So that was the disconnecting process for me. And I found then, also in my own life, that I was getting where I could say, I find from my own experience in life that what, the promise that the Scriptures tell me will happen if you do what you're supposed to, or do this, this will follow, I found that wasn't true. It didn't fit for me, so I was beginning to disconnect experientially, from my own experience from this thing.

MJ: I think you also mentioned that you could look around you and find people who were apparently righteous who were having problems, and others who weren't so righteous ...

MS: That were being prospered. This was a theme. These are very dominant themes in the stories in the Book of Mormon. So all of this was that process again of finally claiming my right to look at it for what was real

for me rather than looking at it from the authority, authoritative premises that you could build a case. Then I found also as I became inactive in the Church that that reinforcement pattern, every Sunday the testimony meetings, the doctrine and the social mingling and everything without that reinforcement was also liberating in the sense that you know, because the reinforcement took me back into the old patterns. So that was a factor too. So, I found then, myself studying history and asking what history was really telling me. That was part of that intellectual paradigm that I'm talking about and I came to a point in my life that history itself, first of all was always incomplete, and secondly, from my own experience, I knew that the message of history, or the verbiage of history, whether in the initial documents, or whether it was in the scholarly work, still represented an interpretation which was probably just as valid as, I mean it was objective, it was just as valid given the paradigm, but there was a premise, still, that even the historians started out with. First of all, that with history, he could learn what went on in the past. I found out that that could be easily challenged. I remember reading an account of a man, an experience down on Colorado River in 1865, that he wrote within six months of the event. Then he had written a book twenty-four years after that and the two, the one twenty-four years after was all this miraculous -- in other words, there was all this interpretation about God's hand and what was going on, while the other one was, it was hotter than hell, and the wind blew, and we needed the floods and the Indians drove my oxen into the mire and so on. So I was again I was able to see the limitations of what history can actually say. And as far as Mormon history was concerned I found among my colleagues, many of whom I really respected as historians, that they simply disconnected, in other words, but they didn't acknowledge the disconnection, in other words, they claimed they were being objective with their history, and that some way or other, they could prove, not prove Mormonism because that's not the purpose of history, but they wrote with the assumption that Mormonism is true, therefore their bias as to the history was valid. Like Brigham Young...

MJ: They had to do some real gymnastics...

MS: Right. Like Brigham Young you know. This is the place, the vision out in Utah, where the Mormon battalion we saw being asked to go. The Mormons tried to get the Battalion there but it served the purposes many of the historians to see the Mormons as the persecuted people, the evil people trying to destroy the good Mormons, so when they asked the Mormons to come West, or to join the Army in the war against Mexico, the Mormons

viewed that as a sacrifice when, in fact, the Mormons had gone back and asked President Polk if they couldn't enlist some of the men because that would be a good way for them to get to California. And get paid, if they could go to their people, get help to get their families to get West, you see. So there's a kind of dishonesty, you see.

MJ: One good example I wish you'd touch on real briefly is the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

MS: Yes. Well, again, here you have with the coming of the Army, a decade after the Mormons came into the valley in 1857, you have the Mormons are in a state of unrest and rebellion as far as the public officials are concerned, and they're sending reports back. And they sent an army out here to Utah and as part of that response to that unsettled and uncertain condition, Brigham Young then initiates a policy of alerting the Saints and preparing them, psyching them up, so to speak as George A Smith points out, and what you have out of that, you have a wagon train that goes South in August and September 1857, and eventually is massacred about 50 miles SW of Cedar City, Utah.

MJ: A U.S. wagon train?

MS: It was not a government ... it was the Fancher Party from Arkansas. But it was basically a family wagon train and possibly some horseback riders from Missouri, but most of it seems to be basically a family wagon train. About 120 people were killed. At that time, except the little women and children. It happened because there was a deliberate decision to do that. It's been presented before, this isn't my opinion, it's been presented before as an accident of history because of the unrest, the hostility towards the Missourians, for their Mormon experience in Missouri. The Mormons had a reformation where because they'd had frost and grasshoppers, the reason they'd had frost and grasshoppers in the Lord's vineyard is because the Mormons weren't good enough. So they had to repent, they had to reform, so they had a reformation. So there was that spiritual fervor being stirred up among them. And then they had a doctrine called Blood Atonement which they were teaching at the time. If you..most of your sins could be forgiven through the blood of Christ, but if you sinned against innocent blood, like a child death or something, or if you knew through the holy spirit that Jesus was the Christ, and then denied him, you would become a son of and there was no forgiveness for you in this world or in the world to come. Through

the atonement of Christ and if you were married in the Temple and sealed in time and all eternity, like in plural marriage was the Temple marriage, plural marriages were usually Temple marriages, and committed adultery after making that sacred covenant, for time and all eternity, then there was question whether or not you could be forgiven that. By the blood of Christ. Then if you shed your own blood, or somebody sheds your blood, that was Blood Atonement. So you had these people from Missouri that persecuted the Mormons. Some of them were supposedly claimed that they had the gun that killed old Joe Smith and Brigham Young when they came back from California. See, that was the kind of triggering the accident of the massacre. Then you can see, well, if we kill those guys, in a sense they're shedding their blood which can help atone for how sinful they are, you see. It's an incredibly vicious concept, you see. But it was taught as late as Joseph Fielding Smith's time in the mid-1950's, that doctrine was still being taught in some places. OK, then the other thing about the massacre, the Indians unrest, the Indians had been poisoned - cattle and several had got sick and died from it. All of this, these are the situations that triggered the accident and the Mormons got just -- the Indians got mad and started it, then the Mormons got involved and the Mormons got pulled in and ended up doing it. The fact is, the Indians that were involved, most of them were not the Indians down past Cedar City, they went as far north as Cedar City, and those Indian chiefs, 12 of them, had gone up to see Brigham Young on the first of September and the massacre occurred on the 11th of September and then they went back down chasing the wagon trains and harassing the wagon trains at Beaver, and ???(143) and Cedar City and on to Mountain Meadows. So the Indians weren't down there by accident. The Mormons had made a decision at council in Cedar City that the wagon train would be destroyed, and the Indians would do it and blame it on the Indians and that would ally the Indians with the Mormons in case the Army came. They didn't want the Indians to join the Army and fight the Mormons, you see. They wanted the Indians to join the Mormons and fight the Army. There was that kind of strategy involved, you see. But when the Indians could not achieve this, because the wagon train dug in and was able to defend itself, the Mormons got involved. It was a young man that had come out -- three came out from the wagon train and one was killed. The other two escaped back, so the Mormons faced a dilemma then of, it appears, sheer knowledge among the wagon train that Mormons were involved in the massacre with the Indians. At that point then the Mormons made a decision, they had expressed going back to the Church and military, militia, in Paroin (156) Cedar City, and they made a decision at that point that the wagon train would be destroyed

and that the militia would participate.

MJ: Now the obvious question from the steadfast Mormon is, Can you prove that, is that in writing? Can you document that?

MS: Yes, the events of the massacre are pretty well accepted and documented as fact. Now a lot of the original, contemporary records of the period are not available. Diaries have had pages torn out of them and minutes of meetings and other kinds of things that would normally be used when available, you know, a lot of that stuff is probably locked up in the vault of the first presidency, or has been destroyed and so forth -- that's the first presidency of the LDS church.

MJ: This is part of the process of the church deliberately fabricating or coming up--formulating an idea to support dogma.

MS: Right, and to protect themselves, you see. And so, when the prosecution of the people involved began to occur, they were out to get Brigham Young and John D. Lee, who was an active participant in the massacre, and the one who was finally prosecuted for it, would not turn state's evidence against Brigham Young. First of all, what he knew about Brigham Young's position, there's no record that shows that. But, by the Doctrine of Covenants, the section dealing with eternal marriage, the sacred marriage, it says if a person has been sealed under the new and everlasting covenant of marriage by the Holy Spirit of Promise, in the Temple, that's the temple ceremony, though he commit all manner of sin after that, save the shedding of innocent blood. Now, if he had turned state's evidence against God's anointed prophet, that would be the equivalent, or could be interpreted as the shedding of innocent blood, and so Lee, never would -- oh, they would be destroyed in the flesh, if they committed these sins, they would be destroyed in the flesh, turned over to the buffetings of Satan between death and the final resurrection, but then come forth in the morning of the first resurrection with all their blessings. So, here was Lee who had 16 wives and all these children and they wanted him to turn state's evidence against Brigham Young so they could nail Brigham on it, and Lee refused to do it because he really believed that Young was God's anointed and he believed that the church had a mission, and for whatever reason, he was being scapegoated he did not dare risk eternity for the sake of salvation here now. That's heavily my interpretation, but I have studied Lee's biography and all of these journals and work that Juanita Brooks had done on the massacre.

And I speak with confidence about my interpretation of those things. Then being...coming out of a believing Mormon position, I can identify with those people some how or another saying well, this isn't right, but the authority of the church -- maybe they know something I don't know. Maybe that is -- God -- part of his plan and if I do what they tell me to do and it's wrong they'll have to be responsible.

MJ: Like Mike Robinson was saying, these things are ineffable -- we don't know. There are certain things that our Heavenly Father does that we just can't understand. So, in the final analysis, if you cannot come up with a good scriptural or rational explanation that makes sense to human kind, you can always through it into that other category of the ineffable.

MS: Yeap, right. And see, for myself, having come out of a true believing posture, I can identify with the struggle those people were having when doing that, because there was a time in my life, given the right circumstances I might have been able to participate in my own kind of Mountain Meadows Massacre, you see. And what it was was not taking responsibility for my life. I turneth over to the authorities.... And that, to me, is the great relief, that one I can be and am responsible for my own life.

MJ: One of the other things that I think is interesting and maybe it's a myth that I've adopted as a non-Mormon is that, and I was reminded of this when I came down into the valley. Here was this desert, the Mormons are hard-working people because they took this desert and made it bloom. And that's not necessarily the case I guess.

MS: No, and that again. Osborne Russell and others reported on their experience in the 1840's in Salt Lake Valley and it was a fertile area. It was not Champagne Illinois, or, you know, something like that. But still, streams were running through, grass was stirrup high on many of the saddle horses and it was not the desert and the Mormons write about what a beautiful it was and it was their Mecca. This is the place.

MJ: But it was interesting at Manti the other night, at the Miracle Pageant. The people were at the head of the Immigration Canyon, wherever Brigham Young was talking to them. They were disgruntled and said, oh, no, this can't be the place.

MS: Lorenzo Dahl Young's wife, there were three women came with that

pioneer company in 1847, Lorenzo Dahl, younger brother of Brigham Young, his wife was with him. And Heber C. Kimball had a wife and Brigham Young had a wife, and she was very disappointed and said she would be very willing to drive clear on to California and so Decker Young, I can't remember her name anyway, but she was quoted and was disgruntled about how barren it seemed to her. But you can trace historically the evolution of this concept and then as people would come into the Salt Lake Valley, 5, 10, 15 years after the settlement, they would be sent out to places like Perioum ?? Utah and St. George Utah where it really was desert, and they had the idea, it served the purpose -- look what they did in Salt Lake, look what you can do down here. And the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. His people could make the desert blossom as the rose. See, all of that fit, so people'd get a wet year and it was obvious things were working for them.

MJ: You know, it was fun to be down there with you because, and I want to put this on tape, and that is, Mel, as I was watching the pageant and taking pictures at the same time, while I was watching this pageant you were filling my ear with all of the fallacies and the myths of the church and each time a new scene came up in this pageant you'd tell me, from your perspective, why this was so or this wasn't so. I thought that was sort of interesting because here's this person who's a direct descendent of Joseph Smith himself, setting here, I'm probably the only person here among 25-30,000, 35,000 people who have a direct descendent of Joseph sitting there telling me this isn't the way it was.

MS: Not Joseph Smith, but his brother Samuel.

MJ: But I thought it was interesting your comments about how the church even today, after you watched this Mantai pageant, the church today, you were amazed some of the emphasis they were putting on things, certain things that made the church look good, but other things ...

MS: The downplaying of the role of Brigham Young, the early pioneer experiences to some extent, I mean they were very quickly presented in slides and so forth. And the role of Brigham Young was a benign, very loving, caring man and it leads into this patriotic theme about supporting America and the Mormon Battalion and so on and that's the emphasis they give to it. And of course, my interpretations are very much mine and I may not have many people who would see the world the way I do on that, and

that's real me.

MJ: You said, one time, when we were jogging, socially and culturally I'm still a Mormon.

MS: Yeah, that's -- I'm very comfortable with the Mormon lifestyle. No smoking, no drinking and that type of thing. I'm very comfortable with that. I like to go to a dance, but I don't want to go to a bar to dance. I don't like the environment, see what I'm saying? That type of thing. But I associate with people at single's dances, I'm single now, but I don't go to their church meetings, so the disconnecting during the time that we've been talking, that has been going on. I have disconnected more, but I find that most of the people I've associated with and the women I date are mostly Mormons.

MJ: Well, maybe that has something to do with percentages. Somebody told me that 70% of the state is Mormon. Fifty percent may be in Salt Lake, but..

MS: There is that factor too. But I just find that I still like the clean lifestyle that I find there, so... But I also find that if a person's orthodoxy is pretty rigid, that in terms of a long term, marriage relationship I find myself discounting that as a possibility. I don't think that I could marry a really orthodox Mormon.

MJ: I think too, it must be comfortable for you to discuss things that are church related even with the orthodox and know that you can carry on a conversation -- it's like a language. You are fluent in the Mormon language.

MS: Yeah, and I find myself knowledgeable enough, both scripturally and historically that I can hear what they're saying and anymore I don't have the emotional issue that I have to convert them to the fallacy of their ways. I can just accept that it's real for them and that's OK for me.

MJ: I have a feeling that as long as you didn't have to get into a discussion of orthodoxy or things like the Mountain Meadows Massacre that you'd get along just fine.

MS: I get along fine with the other too. I talked to this group down in Ephraim, this single's group. I talked about the Mountain Meadows Massacre. When we got done one of the very devout fellows who had just

divorced recently said well, your version of the Mountain Meadows is not the way I've heard it. I said, where did you get your information? He thought a minute and he realized that he just had, he hesitated and said well, I learned more about Mountain Meadows tonight..I didn't think it was possible that anybody knew that much about the Mountain Meadows Massacre. But it took him a moment when asked that question, to ask himself, well, how do I know what I know?. Then he realized that he didn't really have any .. he was an honest enough man and well-educated, that he realized that when he got down to examine it, he didn't have any good sources./

MJ: Before we leave this second paradigm now, how do you look upon yourself in terms of Mormonism today? Do you feel that you are a renegade? Have you made an accommodation to a system that in some ways has precepts that are untenable for you? How do you look upon yourself now?

MS: I do not believe that the Mormon church has any particular divine or special position, that there's an authority residing in the priesthood and the church authorities. While there seems to be some flexibility showing in the Church institutionally, which I would welcome, in terms of priesthood to the blacks and modifications in some of the Temple ceremonies and other things, to me, for my needs, I just simply don't want to drag the old vehicle along. I don't have to. Some of my children are still very believing and active in the church and I find myself being able to accept that without any rancor or if it's real and meaningful to them, that's perfectly...I can live with that. Because my reality is my reality and their reality is their reality and they are who they are and they are where they are in their lives at this time. And so I'm comfortable with that for my children. I'm unable to relate with them. I'm honest with them how I feel. I talk to my children -- my believing children just like I'm talking here now so they know exactly where I am as far as the church is concerned. But they also know that I don't know that they're wrong, or that I don't know that God doesn't exist. My position would basically be agnostic at this point. The third paradigm that I want to talk about is feeling that I'm finally making some connection with the universe which I do not necessarily identify as a Father in heaven, a Mother in heaven, or a personification of a Deity. It may be that, I don't know. I just don't know. But I do know that the creative force that I can make some kind of identity that there is something there and by virtue of the fact that I am it's creature, I am it's child, as we all are, that I belong to the universe in

that sense, I have some connection by virtue of the fact that it created me, I am it's child. And so, how I maintain that connection, or establish that connection is to be aligned within myself as a human being so that consciously and unconsciously my mental and feelings and all of me is lined up so that I'm not consciously saying I want "A", when unconsciously, which is the controlling thing really, is saying I want "B". And so by getting in touch with feelings and living the whole me, what am I about, what is unique about Melvin Smith, or Mark Junge, you see, and getting in touch with that and setting my purpose in life on the basis of , what's special about me. Everybody is created differently, we are a little different when we are created is a better way to say it, if we can get in touch with that uniqueness that ours, and live our lives in touch with that, then we'll be lined up with the universe as long as we can do that. I find within myself, the uniqueness that I can find is that I am a, you know, I say my purpose in life is through my inspiration, my ability to inspire people, and my compassion for people by challenging them and supporting them I am creating a universe, a world of abundance, and balance and opportunity for peace.

MJ: I really admire you for that, I think what you've done is take a path where all the old guideposts have disappeared, just vanished. You don't have these guideposts to bounce up against to lead you down a particular path. You're doing this intuitively, almost syncretically when you're asking yourself questions. You bring this up more than once in our discussions, off-tape and on-tape, and that is, "I feel this way, but I think this way. Why do I feel this way?" And this is what you're calling the alignment process. You're trying to bring emotion together with intellectual processes and trying to get yourself straightened out. Which is a real courageous thing because you know, for a lot of Mormons, not just Mormons, but Christians, whether they are Catholics or Protestants, maybe for Jews, maybe for Islam, those guidepost make life a whole, hell of a lot easier. You don't have to think about things.

MS: OK. They appear to be, you know. The guideposts I had -- rather than solving a problem directly, I used to say, "God, help me to understand what to do so I can do it right" and so forth. And I found on some things that I couldn't get the message from God to know what to do, so I decided to do what I could. And I found, you see, that when I did that, or when I would get into extreme situations, in the case of dealing with someone in extreme situation with my children, that we talked about privately, that I didn't have a guidepost to go off of, so Melvin had to think and use his own judgment.

And I think he did real well in those situations. But normal, you see, I didn't trust myself so I had to use the guideposts. And for me this has been, I mean life is so much easier for me now that it's been in the past. Because I'm OK, just being, rather than doing. Let me get into this third paradigm more specifically. Again, you know, in my study of history, I found myself, about the time I left Idaho, saying, really the question that educators ought to be asking, but certainly historians ought to be asking, is what is a human being? What are we, what is this thing called a human being. Whether we're a son of God, a child of God, an intellectual product of evolution and so forth. That really doesn't answer what's a human being in the sense of, what makes us...are we different than animals, are we just a higher form, what's consciousness, these kinds of things that are finally part of the question, what is a human being. And so that's where I got into, I decided I'd come down and study myself as a human being, I would be the experiment, I would be the laboratory, I would study the me inside, I would be the experimenter. Melvin Smith would study Melvin Smith to find out what a human being was, and from what I found out myself by getting in touch with me and my reality and feelings, examining me, I would try to make some generalizations about what a human being was out there. I was amazed at the kinds of insights I could get about things out there. For example, when I was the President of the Mormon History Association, I found myself having drawn some conclusions about the early Mormon history and behavior and why religious people behave a certain way. And we had Marty from the University of - the School of Theology in Chicago (I haven't got that quite right, but...) He talked about early Christians and early Mormons and how religious people behave and believe and I remember turning to Gail, I was married to Gail then, and you know, kind of glancing and saying, this guy's giving my talk. I was coming at it intuitively, but giving my own insights about myself, who I was and why did I believe and it applied in a generalization that he had come to through a very careful, scholarly study of the record. And I've seen that happen so many times, which was a powerful experience for me. Well, for years I had been trying to get a handle on what was really motivating me, why I was the way I was, and why...I could see changing in me. I could see things as a devout Mormon one time and as an intellectual -- the same material, I'd see it differently. I'd find myself say, "What am I, what is Melvin?" And I got into a studying self-help books and therapy and reading and everything and trying to draw conclusions about what was real for me and out of that I began to trust myself a lot more and realizing that I was an instrument of that change and therefore, what that instrument measured, as the instrument changed the measurements would

change of the same data. That I was a source of information and language and experience and other things and how my mind put that together and my conscious -- it became my consciousness and what I thought about something was affected by what I had in there to think with, you see. The data, the resources and the information. And I found that there were some things that I could deal with rationally, like I could say to myself, "Melvin, you're a good person. You're an interesting person. You're a person to be respected and admired." I mean, you know, I don't feel any arrogance in that statement at all. But deep inside, I didn't feel that way. And I said why not. So I would use positive feedback. I would hug myself physically, put my arms around and love myself. I decided that a basic need in human beings is to love and be loved. And by doing this, by hugging myself, I was loving me and I was also being loved by myself, you see what I mean? Living down here by myself I had the opportunity to be -- that experiment and so on. So it was exciting and I found that rather than berating myself, you know, I had a horse buck with me and you I had to -- almost a premonition that I knew enough about horses and didn't want to get into a critical situation as old as I am, or I could get hurt seriously. Well, that mare bucked with me in the round corral out here and unexpectedly, she bucked, and I at least had enough sense to put her in the round corral, you see. And I really injured myself. Normally, I'd have gone at it when I got done and got off the horse and got settled down. I could hardly get up and down...I couldn't jog anymore and normally I'd have beat up on myself and said, "How stupid can you be?", you know. And I said to myself, "Well, Melvin, we learned something out of that, didn't we? And you're a good person, I love you and now, we're going to heal this up. You've got a hurt in your hip, your hernia is stressing and we're going to heal that, aren't we?" And I just went at it with a positive thing, and this was in the middle of June, '87 and by August of that year I ran a 5K. I beat the president of the college that didn't give me a job. So I felt...

MJ: Immensely satisfied!

MS: Right! It was very important to me for some reason.

MJ: Well, you asked yourself the question probably, why was I in that corral with that horse if I was so concerned about my jogging. If you felt at first, "You stupid ninny, you shouldn't have been on the horse." you probably went back and said, in a way, look there's a historical track to this, I can track this.

MS: Exactly, I did that and horses, I've broken horses all my life, horses are important, horses meant a certain thing and Melvin Smith on a horse, whether I rode a few rodeos or training horses, boy if you want your horse broke right, get Melvin to do it, you see what I mean, there was that historic track, that identity. If you've got a farm, it's nice to have horses. The kids come down, the family, the old family pattern, yeah. All of those things were there.

MJ: So there was a reason for this. It wasn't just an arbitrary get on a horse and try to hurt yourself.

MS: Oh no, absolutely not. But I said to myself...

MJ: Which, if you can ... I guess what I'm saying, which if you can understand like you did, you can be more forgiving.

MS: Well, that's true. But, I mean, I just simply said to myself, "Why do I need horses?". And I realized that I didn't. The reason I needed horses was because I thought I needed horses. The reason I thought I n ♦
eeded horses what the history I just related, see. And I said, I do need to jog. I do need to be able to get out and I don
eeded horses what the history I just related, see. And I said, I do need to jog. I do need to be able to get out and I don't want to be crippled up unnecessarily. If that should happen, I'd have to live with it I guess but... I made a choice -- a deliberate choice to go the way I did and so but what was important to me was I took responsibility for my life and I didn't beat up on myself, see. Which I had done before. You know, you watch John McEnroe perform in tennis--beats up on himself, well, maybe that's motivation. That used to be the way I motivated myself. I don't do that anymore. My motivation all comes from positive types of things. Because I think negative energy is negative energy and if you beat up on yourself it's negative. Why do it? I wouldn't do it to a friend. Why do it to myself? This was how I began to examine it. I said, "Do you love yourself?" And if you're beating up on yourself that isn't a very good expression of love and I was able to examine those kinds of things and so my life began to change. It's processing it. Then I got this concept of family systems analysis. In other words, a human being exists as he is because a family conditions him, whatever that early, primary experiences are has an indelible, lasting impact on how that person perceives himself. What they're saying is the family unit

is an evolutionary thing. To create, to create human beings. The child, a child's mental capacities and thinking processes go through a great evolution. Initially a child thinks very linearly -- very direct cause/effect type of relationship. And so for example, if Dad's mad, I've been bad, you know. If Mother's sad, I've been bad. The child tends to blame itself cause it's the little, the weak, it's scary for the impotent child and one way to give the appearance of control over your life is to take blame for the conditions that exist, because if you're to blame for the conditions, then maybe you can do something about them. But if you were saying there's something wrong with the adult, that's a risky decision to make. If I'm dependent on the adult, and there's something wrong with the adult, that's too risky. Better to have something wrong with me, cause I can change that. They're too powerful, I depend on them.

MJ: There a buffer to the outside world.

MS: There the buffer to life, see. The outside world, in a sense, doesn't exist to the young child. So the younger the issues, the lack of nourishing, nurturing, loving and validation, if a child doesn't get that when they're really young, the greater the impact on their lives. As they get older they'll be able to make some judgment about those things, you see. As I began to see this, I said, well, that begins to fit. So here myself, I saw myself, I'd had experience raising my children and I could see the problems that were existing, but I also was getting enough education that I could see that the way I started parenting my kids under the strong orthodoxy of Mormonism and the pattern of my own parents towards me and what a family meant, I changed it. I didn't like it when I was disciplining my children -- whipping a child -- I didn't like it, but I was doing it because that was what you should do. The kid needed to be taught!

MJ: And the premise was...

MS: Right! Train up -- the parent is responsible for the behavior of the children. And I had no understanding of what childhood was about. That the child needs to be a child. A child is different than an adult. To me a child was a miniature adult and the sooner you could make them responsible, the more successful you would be. And so my purpose was to train that child to be an adult just as soon as I could, to take on responsibility. Of course, it was responsibility where I got recognition, for being responsible, in my own mind. So with this type of family systems analysis I began to

study and to realize that I could get ahold of a lot of motivations. I was shamed as a child. When somebody violates your boundaries by whipping you, other kinds of abuse -- mental, emotional and psychic abuse -- it violates your sense of yourself so I didn't know. I began with the people out there. There wasn't a clear boundary so people could violate my boundary. And I would violate other people's boundaries. By behavior -- my children's boundaries by being physically abusive, you see, and denying their feelings because that's what was done to me. I began to get insights to when and how this process began. And a family systems analysis, I could see that Melvin Smith was what he was, in many ways and particularly feelings, because of what had happened to me in my childhood. I worked intensively on this and I knew for a long time that in terms of how I related to the primary woman in my life that I really had some issues. I'd been married twice and divorced twice and I said to myself, it isn't because I'm not committed to marriage. It isn't because I've been unfaithful. It isn't because I didn't try, didn't work at it, I'd put all the energy I could into it. So there's something wrong. It wasn't because the women weren't intelligent, good, decent human beings, but there was just something about the relationship and it was just simply not worth staying in. And so I was looking, I've been looking for that really for forty years -- for why was I choosing the kind of women as far as primary relationships. And I had the opportunity in February of this year to go to a number of workshops -- Impact Corporation -- in Salt Lake City and now the trainers have organized their own company called Excel, but it's the same type of training where you go in and experience this training. And what they do is approach you with the concept that we are born aligned with the universe. This little is sensitive and knows things but because experiences, teachings, trainings, we develop fixed belief systems around ourselves that say, this is the way it is. We get fixed attitudes and other kinds of things, that when we have an experience, rather than experiencing it unbiased in the present moment, we bring those biases and that's what it means you see. We get out of touch with the present moment and with ourselves. And you know, with my case, my father's physical abuse, it took away my power. Which it does. A little child couldn't say no. I couldn't say to Dad, "Stop it.". Because he violated my boundaries. Well, I got in touch in the workshops with that emotional situation and with the help of the trainer was able to go back emotionally in those experiences and finally just tell my father to stop it. Well, my father has been dead not for 15 years, but... My father was not physically present, but was psychically present and in control in many ways, see, and I finally, in the exercises, just yelled, "Stop it!." You know, just yellin' at it.

MJ: This exorcism then, which is what it was in a way...

MS: Well, no, not exorcism. It's an exercise that is really a reclaim of a power rather than driving a father out, you see.

MJ: Well, OK. Maybe I mislabeled that. Did it work completely for you? Has it allowed you to reclaim the power?

MS: You know, I would say it was more a watershed. It was a big thing for me. Then you still have to work your way through. Around our whole belief system you build a whole superstructure that supports that belief system.

MJ: So it's no miracle conversion type thing that you have to work out over time?

MS: No, no. Well, what is interesting about it is that you, I have it, it's not a conversion type thing, but it's an insight. And in this case when you get back in touch with the feelings and emotions of a child, at least for me, I mean, you know, I knew that I had, and as I talk now, I can still feel that moment. And if Dad were to show up here, and I had something I could say to him, "Stop it!." And I wouldn't have to get angry or passionate, I'd just simply say, "Stop it." See, I know I would do that, on it. That's the reclaiming. I don't know just how to explain the very insight for the question that you're asking. I don't know how to explain it. In some cases, though, there's a dismantling of that belief system, you know what I mean, the superstructure that has forced it, so it's an ongoing thing. And I guess I'd done a lot of it with Dad before I'd actually had this experience of dismantling.

MJ: I guess the connection I made in my mind, Mel, and I don't want to keep you too much longer here. The connection I made in my mind was the more I think about it, you and Mike Robinson just crossed each other in the night, going in opposite directions. And Mike Robinson experienced a conversion which was, if you want to call it that, you can call it an insight. Call it an insight. I mean you can call it whatever you want. I think a conversion is an insight. In Mike Robinson's case it was an insight, he was coldly analytical, coldly rational about most things in his life, all of a sudden he gained an insight which made everything click for him, made everything

click for him. His needs, all of his deep seated needs seemed to find an answer in this insight, and the insight was a conversion to the Mormon faith.

MS: Which was, here is absolute answer.

MJ: Yes. Here are some answers for me which I've been searching for. Maybe they didn't take quite the form or structure -- I mean, they could have taken an Islamic form, they could have taken a Missouri Senate Lutheran form, but here's a structure, a form that I can glum onto, and I got this as an insight. And here you are, coming from the other direction, down the other street, going one way the other direction saying I'm disassociating myself from these things...

MS: Absolutes...

MJ: Absolutes, premises and I'm going to reclaim the power that I lost by accepting all those. You know...

MS: And the reason I accepted them...this third paradigm, this family systems analysis, that the family programmed me by virtue of the training and those basic premises and how I believed about myself, for example, the absence of love by my mother, for whatever reasons, and it's not...and I don't solve the problem by blaming Mother for not loving me, see, but I understand that the child, that was the environment that the child experienced, and the child all my life I've been saying, "Hey, I'm a good boy, see how I'm performing?", which is a way of saying, "Love Me, Love Me. Look what I'm doing for you Marlene (my wife), Look what I'm doing for you Gail (my wife), Look how hard I'm working for you. Love me, love me. Tell me I'm OK." The issue wasn't -- they couldn't solve my problem. My own feelings about myself are my issues and the reason I was feeling the way I was about myself was because of what happened as a child when I was totally dependent on my parents and my mother for my life and you see, because it occurred so early the fear was of death that I would actually die if she didn't love me and take care of me. That's why it's so scary and so difficult for people to move out of those fixed belief systems that come out of that childhood experience.

MJ: Because it's like facing death itself.

MS: Exactly! Exactly! And so for me, now, I look at my own life and you

know, my belief in God was that he was this rigid -- I wouldn't even have formulated it this way -- but as a believing Mormon, he was this rigid, there were these laws which you, you know...He loved you, yes, but he loved those that were faithful, who obeyed, who did what they were supposed to and so forth, you see. And I look back and I realize that I raised my children just like I perceived God to be. I was the Father who disciplined them, who was jealous, who was angry when they did bad, you see what I mean, just like the Old Testament God. I realized that that was the sense of reality that I had, and not only did the way I was raised create that about me, but what God became was the authority in my life conceptually, the authority in my life was God. The concept of God and Mormonism. But the kind of person He was was like the real authority in my life, which was my Father and my Mother. Very rigid and loving on conditions of performance and unforgiving unless you had paid the debt. I paid the debt, see.

MJ: Which was very natural because your earthly father was the one who was watching over you day by day or was there for punishment, for reward, for whatever.

MS: Now in this concept, to understand it, it's important to get back in the child's mind and see how this meant in the child's mind. Not how it looks to the adult looking back, but how was it meaning to the child in that experience. What did it mean being the little kid in that biiiig -- I can look at a picture of me at 10 years old in 1938, my father and family and my brother Roland had blown it up and sent us a copy -- and I remember looking at that and this is after I had gotten some insights, and here I am at 10 years old, and I'm hunched over and wearing these kneepants -- this was during the Depression -- they were hand-me-downs from a cousin in Washington, DC - - and I hated those short pants. Kids made fun of me and everything. I'm standing there, my shoulders are hunched like that, and I remember looking at that picture and being in touch with my childhood feelings -- I'd been back up to Cowley, this is what I was talking about, looking back at that experience and getting in touch with that how I was feeling good about myself in spite of all that positive things I could site. I looked at that picture and I saw my shoulders hunched like this, and I hunched them and I could feel, I could feel Dad whipping me on it. I looked at that and here was Dad there with those ten children and Mother's there and Dad's the patriarch, proud. "This is evidence that I'm a good man." I didn't sense in it haughtiness or that type of thing, but just, this is just the way it's supposed to be. And I remember looking at him and seeing how big he was and how

big Mother was, even at that age. I remember looking at him and saying, “You mean son of a bitch!”, and getting in touch with that period of my life when I was subject to whippings on almost a daily basis and so forth. And being able you see, I was in touch enough with myself to start reclaiming power and placing the blame, I mean, placing my reality back on Dad, and saying, “You were a mean son of a bitch.” That’s what the child experienced. And he was. I’m not judging Dad, I’m telling what the child experienced. Do you see what I’m saying? That’s the importance I think.

MJ: How do you’d think you relate to your father today, if he were alive? I know there are a lot of variables involved.

MS: Yeah. Well, you know, again, it’s speculative. I don’t know just where Dad would be. But I think I could share with Dad that I understand what went on, but I would also let my father know that my experience -- now, in the workshops we use the expressions, rather than saying you did this, or you did that, or you should do this or that -- say, my experience with you...

MJ: Or, I feel this way...

MS: Right. But, my experience, so I’m describing rather than defining you. I would say to Dad, “My experience with you Dad, I was afraid of you, because you were mean to me and you didn’t trust me and you misjudged me.”

MJ: How would he react?

MS: I don’t know. But that’s not my responsibility, see, that’s his responsibility. That’s the thing. I’m not responsible for my children’s feelings. I’m not responsible for your feelings. That’s how I see this. I’m responsible for my feelings. How you react to what I say and do is a choice that you have. That doesn’t mean that if I behave like a son of a bitch, that I’m going to have a friend. You see what I’m saying.

MJ: No.

MS: But finally and ultimately, how you feel is your business. What goes on inside of you is not my business, it’s your business. And that’s one of the children in the AA programs. I mean, you know. I wonder what they’re

thinking. What they're thinking is none of your business Melvin. What Melvin's thinking is my business. Mark, this is the healthy way for me to live life and experience life. And out of this family systems analysis you see, I've been able now to understand how I got to be how I was and to understand it. I found myself -- I was writing these letters to my children telling them how much I loved them and trying to be helpful and all of a sudden I started understanding they were hearing that "I'm not OK the way I am. Dad's still at it, I never could please him." I was really trying to be helpful. See, I was trying to be helpful, which means if you're helping a person, they're helpless. Which means you have to take responsibility for them, and if you take responsibility for them, then you have to control them. So I was still trying to control my children. So when I was giving my children, doing for my children, I was doing for me. So I would feel all right about myself. Now I find that I can simply love them and I don't have to take responsibility for them.

MJ: It's sort of a liberating thing.

MS: It's incredibly liberating. Now I can relate to them and the love I'm feeling back from my children now. Children naturally love. What's interesting is a 62 year old man with 37 - 25 year old children, to have them love me as a child to a parent. It's just an incredible experience. I don't lie to you that this would happen for me. What's happened is I've got these insights - I've taken responsibility for my part in their lives, growing up as children, I wrote several letters to them, the insights I had. I said, "There was a lot of shit in your life growing up as a child of Melvin Smith, and I want you to know that the shit came from me, where I was involved, and not from you as children."

MJ: Are you saying then that you want them, in this liberating process, that you want them, would like them to respond to you as daughter and son to father, or as human being to human being?

MS: There's no way they can't react as daughter to father and son to father because they are children to parents because that's there-- that's part of that process of the family humanizing. But much of our discussion would be like to children - like we're siblings almost, children working through their problems with their parents. Because that's where the hang-ups come from the childhood experience for most of us. Whether it's dysfunction, whether the validation of the child wasn't adequate, whatever, abuses, all of those

things still dominate our lives until we work through them. So here we are, they're children dealing with their parents who happen to be me, and I'm a child, dealing with his parents, who happen to be Dad. So we speak as contemporaries almost, as siblings about it. Yet there is, when they get the insight about a parent, then I can acknowledge it. They'll say something like, "Well, when I was doing this, I didn't really get any feedback or acknowledgment on it." And I try to immediately say "I'm sorry I wasn't there the way I'd like to have been. I wasn't there to acknowledgment and love." In other words, I own the fact that there was a deficiency. It may have been absolutely impossible to be there, but that isn't the issue.

MJ: It's how they feel about it.

MS: The child, you see deserved that and for whatever reason the parenting was insufficient, the child still experienced it as insufficient. So it's not a judge the parent issue, but I am the parent and the role of parenting -- that was the purpose of parenting in this family systems analysis, this paradigm, so what they need now is acknowledgment. "Hey, I hear ya. You deserve parenting and I wasn't there and I wish I had been, and I want you to know how much I love you now, and how proud I am of you." All that feedback because they're in touch with their feelings and if they can hear it now they can start the healing. It's an incredibly powerful thing.

MJ: Where do you think you'll go from here?

MS: Well, I'm hoping, in terms of the family, I find myself hoping that my daughter Dion will eventually heal and get into a recovery program for her alcoholism; I'm hoping that her mother, I don't ever see Marlene getting back together, but the last time I was in Arizona, I did visit with her with Rynell, with the three of us, then with Dion, the three of us and we talked about some of these things, which is the first time. I find myself wanting her to heal, in part, I mean I want her to be healthy and happy too, see, whole as I see it happening to the children, for her sake, but also, she's part of the family. No way! And the children, we all need her to heal too, cause we're family and I don't mean family in the sense of were a family, I mean in the sense of this family systems analysis, that's what created us and that's what made us dysfunction was that there were these deficiencies and as long these deficiencies went unaddressed and dealt with, somebody is going to be unhealthy and as long as somebody is unhealthy, the family is going to have some dysfunction in it.

MJ: Now, you're not trying to turn back the pages of time and gain control over situations are you?

MS: No, absolutely not. You see, I see, I talk to my children, Mark and it's like talking to you. I consider you a very bright and insightful person. Talking to my children -- an incredible respect from my children. I learn, and the key in it I think is the honesty, they come across real, I come across real now.

MJ: So you can all grow.

MS: You can all be, is what I'd say, and the growing will happen. And the healing will happen. We don't heal one another. If we can be, it's like when you plant a tree and it grows. You don't make it grow, you can water it and everything, but you don't make it grow. It grows. By being, allowing ourselves to be and accept each other, then the healing and the growing can occur.

MJ: Let me ask you this question. Are we done with this paradigm, pretty much.

MS: I think so. Well, let me just make one kind of -- one of the very critical insights for me had to do with relating with the primary female in my life and I knew this problem I was having relating to women was critical to how I was seeing myself. While rationally I could identify that I did not need the validation of a woman, the child within me still was feeling that and through the workshops and the relationship with Carolyn Hawes I had worked through a lot of that and gained some insights that I realized that I still deep inside of myself was in that relationship asking her to validate me, which I had asked Gail and which I had asked Marlene, and I was able to accept that fact that I didn't need that -- I mean emotionally I was able to accept that fact. But I still didn't understand why I was still doing that, you see. I realized that was still going on, and I said to myself when I got that insight with Carolyn, that I've changed. I told her, I have changed out of that experience. OK, I staffed a workshop for Excel, a first level workshop, Discover they call it, where they had a trust game in there in which you trust people, and they talk about people wearing masks and if you can see a person wearing a mask you can't trust them. Because the mask hides a lot of what's going on inside. They pretend to be this, which they are sometimes,

but they're a whole lot of other things. I found myself saying I still don't get it. Then they talk about, if you've got a trust issue, you've got a trust issue with yourself. Do you trust yourself. I began to realize then, put it together, and realized that I was wearing a mask and the mask that Melvin Smith was presenting to the women in his life on this primary basis of it, was that Melvin Smith needs a woman to validate to him that he is OK. And so I was finding women that said, I can do that. They didn't do it rationally, but they saw the mask. And the mask that they wore that I was attracted to was, I validate men. What I really wanted in a relationship was a combined kind of commitment that I was willing to make and could make over at point B and they were existing at Point A and because I thought that I needed them to validate me I was selecting them and trying by my behavior, being helpful, assisting, being real nice and everything to get them to move from Point A to Point B, which they didn't want to go there because that wasn't their reality, their needs, their purpose. And so, when I got that insight I pulled off my mask and I could see. I could see and I can see in my relationship with people, not just women, the mask they're wearing at a level I never could see before. I mean, it's a whole new world. And I can relate to people wearing masks and I just admit that that's who they are and that's where they choose to be in their lives and that's OK, but I wouldn't pick one of those people. Like if I was going down and go off a cliff, I wouldn't pick a person with a mask that says my hands slip on the rope sometimes. So, if I want a woman at Point B, I find a woman who's at Point B.

MJ: Now, in your latest relationship are you approaching that relationship with, what's her name, Ellie?

MS: Yeah, Ellie Schoenfield.

MJ: Are you approaching that relationship with a new point of view, a new mask, what?

MS: No mask, no mask on it. I am, you know, it's interesting. Before, I went into a relationship to get married, you see what I'm saying? Now, I'm in a relationship and marriage may happen. The relationship in the sense of just being with that person and seeing where it takes us. In other words, being in the present, experiencing the present rather than making the present valid cause it's going to lead to marriage, see, that's why the present is important. It's a whole different approach. And, but it's clearly a different relationship.

MJ: Have you selected somebody, then, who doesn't have a mask?

MS: Oh, I would say there's some mask, but...I guess everybody will always have some mask on them.

MJ: At least, she's not wearing a mask that says "I will validate you."

MS: Oh no, no, no, clearly, you see. Totally different, you know, as I talk to her she comes from a totally different background, she has a feeling about herself, it's an interesting thing. Before I never would have been comfortable with her because she's too independent. She is her own person too much. What I needed was somebody who was co-dependent. See. That needed me.

MJ: But here's a person, maybe, that can appreciate your qualities rather than needing you.

MS: Exactly. That's what makes, I think, so in terms of I'm just going to kind of let things happen, but in terms of potential, if you back off and talk to her rationally, the potential is very exciting.

MJ: I gotta ask you this, cause I thought about this when you were talking. In a way the Mormon church really screwed up with you. And the way they screw up with people like Mel Smith is because, the Mormon church, as I understand it, promotes education. OK. And they promoted education in you...

MS: The Glory of God is intelligence. Whatever degree of intelligence you attain in this life it will rise with you in the resurrection. He that learneth more in this life will take advantage in the world to come.

MJ: But, you see, what happened with all that education eventually broke you out of a pattern. You might have been a farmer in Cowley, but that education broke you out and your jobs broke you out of certain patterns, it allowed you to take certain paths, maybe devious in the church's point of view, but you took these devious paths and it just, it just completely turned everything on it's head. I mean, education, for you, led to liberation.

MS: That's a very astute observation about it. I remember thinking, here a

year or two ago, and you know, I feel better about myself now than any other time in my life. I remember observing to myself, when I got home from my mission in 1922, in 1950, you know, you kind of have that church pattern of how you're supposed to be, you'd get an education, you'd get married in the Temple, you'd have your family and they'd be all good kids and go on missions and the whole thing. It seemed like Heaven. That dream seemed like Heaven.

MJ: Just the same thing for these people at the Manti Pageant.

MS: Yeah. I thought to myself, if somebody had said to me at the moment, Melvin, forget the dream. Because this is the real world, this is what's really going to happen to you. You're going to have kids that are drug addicts, alcoholics, you know, and they will leave the church. I'll say, God, take me now cause I can't endure that. And yet, the joy out of life that I have experienced, even with the pain with the children that I have experienced, the pain is a great teacher, for me anyway and I've talked to other people who have experienced it, the pain somehow or other, makes us dig down deep and the joy I've experienced in life -- I couldn't even have conceived of that joy, with the dream then, that I feel now. And the experiencing of my children now, I didn't know there was such a thing because I never experienced. You know, you can kind of conjure up, you were talking about your father's concept of loving God, you know, well, I can remember conjuring up this image of what loving God meant and almost being euphoric about it. Almost saying, God take me now -- I'm ready to go to Heaven. Whatever thy will is, it's good enough after I read the book of Mormon the first time. And really being caught up in that message of you know, how God was operating so directly in people's lives. But it's nothing like what I'm experiencing now. And to be free, to feel OK, not only OK, but to feel good about myself. And I don't mean that I'm better than anybody else, I hope I don't come across that way to people. But I feel good about being Melvin Smith, just being. If I get sleepy, I can go over there and lie down on that couch and I don't feel guilty about it. I don't -- it's all right to be me and to see me as important and to see me as important enough to take care of myself.

MJ: It's really nice that this mental liberation has taken place at the same time that kind of an economic liberation, I mean, you described yesterday about your condition. In every way, physically, you were strapped, you know. Now, although you're not wealthy, you're in a position where you

can take care of yourself. And that liberation has come at a really good time in your life.

MS: Yeah, the Greeks have a saying in that you're wealthy in how much you can do without. You know, I went to a workshop with my daughter, Rynell, down in Las Vegas. And Wings of Excellence is what she's into. They asked a question of the group as it was getting started. What would you do if you had a million dollars that you're not doing now? At first I thought that it was a ridiculous question, but then I realized it really was or had a very specific meaning for a lot of people.

MJ: It's a very liberating thing. What would you do if you were liberated?

MS: Yeah, so I thought and thought and thought, and when it came my turn to respond, I said, I don't know, I'd probably give it to my daughter Rynell, who's getting a divorce and has four little kids to take care of. And I said, most of what I want is available to me now, and for me to just simply have money to have a bigger home or nicer trailer. I turned down those options and made my choice and I told them about making the choice to come back down here, and I mean. I wouldn't turn down a million dollars if somebody offered it to me, see. But I'd probably set up an education fund if I had a million dollars, for my children and grandchildren you know, to tap into and, you know, something like that, I don't know. In terms of what do I want to do with my life??? I have clean air, beautiful scenery and enough that I can, you know, I've got 173,000 on my little pickup. If I scrimped, I could be driving a fancy car, make a good impression on the girls, you know what I mean? And I say to myself, hey, that's not important to me, and if I don't make an impression on them, I don't want them anyway. If it takes my car, then I've done the wrong thing.

MJ: I see you as a person who is eventually ♦
ly going to get involved with people again in some way. A teacher, a group leader, maybe not -- maybe even back with the church in some respect, but I see you working with people. As I mentioned yesterday, and I don't
ly going to get involved with people again in some way. A teacher, a group leader, maybe not -- maybe even back with the church in some respect, but I see you working with people. As I mentioned yesterday, and I don't think we put this on tape, I see you as an educator.

MS: Yeah. I really am. I see myself. I thought about going back and

teaching and I said, where would there be an opportunity to teach were people would be comfortable with what I want to say?

MJ: Just about anywhere.

MS: I don't think so. They wouldn't want me to talk about the Mormon Church the way I want to talk about the Mormon Church at Snow College or Dixie College or even at Utah University. So I say, you know, if I write my book, there's where I can express myself and who I am, and out of that then, that may be the lecture tour, the group talks and stuff like that that you're thinking about. I see that as a possibility. I don't want to set a timeline. I should be writing. I hear that coming on me. I look what's happened to me in a year's time and I would have been foolish to have been writing before. I've been writing in my journal so that what's going on with me is there, but in terms of having something to say, I didn't have me uncovered and owned and known like I feel I'm doing now.

MJ: And what's that book going to be called?

MS: The Paradigms of Paradise.

MJ: I would even go so far to say, I think a good title for your book would be Confessions of a Renegade Mormon Historian.

MS: Yeah, you probably, in terms of marketing, would be a much better title. All that Paradigms of Paradise is a way of focusing. I don't know that that would be how I'd do it.

MJ: How pages do you have in your journal -- how many years do you have in your journal?

MS: I started in January of '86 writing in my journal and I've been writing daily in my journal. I have about 3600 pages of handwritten in my journal now.

MJ: Do you realize that by writing a book, you could really help people out? Especially maybe even people in your own, not your own, but the Mormon faith?

MS: You raise the question that I've had to deal with, and that's the moral

imperative of information. That's a Greek, part of our Roman and Greek obligation. If you have information you have to share it. I've been wrong so much of my life, with my moral imperatives, of what I had to share and tell with other people. I found that most of the things I've told other people offended them or I mean, the people I really was trying to convert or move along, so that I find myself say, what Have I really got to say to somebody. Have I got a message for Heman Smith, my son, that he needs that would help him? In a general rational way I think, yeah, these are good insights and they would be helpful. But I found that here's some guy, only been sober for 2 days in an AA meeting and he'll say something that hits my son, my daughter or me that Whammo, you know what I mean, so what have I got to say, am I in a superior position?

MJ: Let's put it this way, Mel. I maybe took the wrong tack there. I think your story and in telling and showing all its warts, would be very interesting. If not instructional, if not helpful, if nothing else, it would be interesting.

MS: I appreciate that expression of confidence, and I agree with you. What's helpful, Mark, is I'm not into that anymore. And I find in living my life now, being is what keeps me sane in a sense. That I don't have to do, I don't have to give you insights on it. That may happen. Your experience of me -- I hope it will be positive and I expect it will, you see. But I'm not setting out to do something for you, and for me that's a relief and it keeps me sane and focused on who I am because my purpose is to be the kind of human being I want to be. If I want to get my kids the way they ought to be, then I take on a whole burden.

MJ: What you would have to do is question whether or not publishing a book like that would be something that you would want to do.

MS: Yeah, I say to myself, OK what is Melvin Smith about finally in terms of his imprint. I go down through the Grand Canyon and one billion, five million years into the formation a trilobite? He's not much, but he's been there, now what's going to be left of Melvin Smith's footprints, see?

MJ: Well, you don't have to wait till your death bed to put that down on paper.,

MS: I know that, but the point I'm making is I think that it's not that I have a contribution, but Melvin existed, Melvin was in the Universe and Melvin

had some impact that would be there if I didn't do anything, through my kids and so forth, and if I can honestly define myself and some way or other put that record out, hey, that's how I feel about, that would be, I want to do that.

MJ: But you're enough of a historian to understand that historians write from an arbitrary point of view and a point in time and no historian and no historian writes the final story. I mean (245) Gibbons "Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire" was not the last word, and everybody knows that and accepts it, but they appreciate it for what it was. And I would think for you, writing, as you probably know, writing may open up new paths of self-discovery and new paths of knowledge for you. I just don't see you staying here as a let's say, a semi-recluse, now you're not a recluse. You've got family, you've got friends, you've got people calling you up on the phone here, you've got lots of people. I see you as more of a man of the world. Now that's just my perception of you and I just think writing a book would enable you to experience, with what comes with writing a book, things in life that maybe you hadn't touched on before. Let's put it this way, if nothing else, it's an experience. Like going down the Colorado in a raft. I never did that before.

MS: Yeah, and I hear you and I guess this reality now for me of tapping into the abundance of the Universe, and rather than trying to force it, of what I do, I feel that I'm going to go with the flow and part of what I think will be in that flow will be a book. But I don't want to define as to why I'm doing it -- it becomes a formula or purpose. I just want it to experience. I don't know if you've read Fritz Pearl's In And Out of the Garbage Pail, Gestalt Therapy. He's the major spokesman, the father of it. He wrote In And Out of the Garbage Pail. And it just goes in and out of the stream of consciousness and he's talking and the whole thing and he'll go off into poetry, he'll have a dialogue with his upper self and his lower self, you know, it's just you're experiencing this guy. In his experience he's talking about meeting this little gal, you know, and all kinds of things, he's not trying to do something, in the sense of creating this, there's nothing wrong with doing those things. In terms of what I'm trying to do, I would like it to just happen. Which requires some focused energy. I look at where I am now. I could no more have done this a year ago -- sit down with you and break these things down this clearly, and certainly five years ago. But I could have written my autobiography five years ago. Probably easier.

MJ: Probably lots easier. You should do some reading in the post-modern

ideas and approaches. I think you're ready for that. My son -- you say, my children have really educated me -- and my son educates me really. Going to CC

MS: Are you talking about New Age stuff?

MJ: I think it might be. I don't know what you call it. It's called post modern. He introduced me to a book called White Noise by Don DeLillo (314). I can't explain it, but it's somewhat like this stream of consciousness thing that you're describing, but within that stream of consciousness there are all sorts of little barbs poked at society for what we're doing and it really opened my mind. I thought Dan should be reading the classics, you know, I asked Michener who his favorite authors were and he named Thackeray, Dickens, Dryser, Alsock (324) and I guess to my way of thinking a liberal education for Dan would be that he would read these authors and more, more than I ever read, and especially in the American traditions. Dan comes back with this White Noise and I'm going, yeah. Well, I'll read it if I have time. I was open and ready for this book, and I enjoyed it. But it's a post modern book and I'm not quite sure about the tenets of post modernism but it's just something I would recommend, and I think you should read it.

MS: Yeah, I'd like to read it. See, I'm taking a journal of (337) noetic science, Sun Magazine

MJ: What is noetic science?

MS: That's the knowledge, the new kind of knowledge, looking a new kinds of paradigms. In other words, what we know is based upon what we presume again, in terms of the methodology and is the scientific methodology able to deal with the modern wo9rld. And where is the scientific methodology taking us ultimately.

MJ: Yes, and I guess one of the tenets of the post modern thinking is that science is invalid. Science has brought us as much misery as good.

MS: Which is true of religion see. And then I went to a group -- Beyond the Quantum. It talks about how themind works. Is the mind something that is a function of the brain and they have some of the hydroenchphalitics and some of them function as if they had a whole brain, So what is the mind? And they're talking, you take Rupert Shelldrakes, Morphogenic Field, that

there is a morphogenic field created and our past history follows immediately. Memory is this morphogenic field that follows right behind us all the time, so the mind may be this morphogenic field -- it's a creative field, see. This stuff just blows you out of the saddle. I just read Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea*. Incredible story. I mean, I read - I probably average two books a week in my reading. And but anyway, it's just an incredible. But *The Deep Ecology*, a book on why the environmentalists, their approach is not going to solve the problem, because they're talking about the wilderness areas and saving the white owl or whatever, when in fact the issue is an attitude about life and existence that we have to have a deep change so we are no longer conspicuous users and wasteful and all these other things; respect for the environment and the world we live and so forth.

MJ: Well, anyway, I think this book is on the horizon for you. Something is on the horizon for you.

MS: I just want to express how much I appreciate the chance to talk with you and be interviewed and I want to thank you.

MJ: This has been great, super. I've enjoyed it and I think it's the best interview I've had, bar none.